DAILY NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

THE TIMES

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Steak and sauerkraut I tried the Maga diet

Harry wants to come home more? I can see it now

INSIDE TIMES2

Bans on car washes and private pools loom in emergency plan

Aubrey Allegretti
Chief Political Correspondent

Ministers were told to brace themselves for widespread bans on water use at car washes and private swimming pools during secret talks about how to combat the drought.

Whitehall officials have drawn up a "reasonable worst-case scenario" that would feature restrictions on businesses if the low levels of rainfall continue. About 27 million people in England are in areas covered by hosepipe bans.

However, government scenario planners have warned that non-essential use bans (NEUBs) could become widespread. The restrictions are applied for by water companies and, if authorised by ministers, allow for curbs on car washes, window washing and refilling of private swimming pools, including gyms.

The environment department can issue exemptions, which The Times has been told could involve football grounds. So far, only Southern Water has applied for a NEUB.

Government sources said five reservoirs were recording exceptionally low volumes, while seven were more notably low, out of the 31 in England and Wales.

The Environment Agency and environment department have set up weekly meetings of the National Drought Group. This includes the Met Office, water companies and nature experts.

Craig Beaumont, executive director of the Federation of Small Businesses, said: "Restricting small firms and the self-employed will hit livelihoods, so public agencies including HMRC must be ready to help if a business or sole trader gets in trouble."

A government spokesperson said: "We are preparing for a range of scenarios and working with the National Drought Group to help maintain water supplies."

Wildfires, pages 10-11

Disability claimants would swap cash for help

Half are open to less benefit in ministers' reform

Daisy Eastlake Political Reporter

Half of disability benefit claimants would be prepared to sacrifice £1,000 a year in exchange for services such as therapy and healthy meals.

Ministers are set to consider plans this year to replace financial benefits with other forms of support in some cases.

The Good Growth Foundation, an economic think tank, found that 31 per cent of people claiming disability benefits such as the personal independence payment (Pip) and other sickness benefits would sacrifice at least £50 a week of in exchange for services that helped with their condition.

Forty-nine per cent would be prepared to sacrifice at least £20 a week to access therapy, physical aids, employment support and healthy meals, among other options.

More than four million people now claim Pip, which is non-means-tested and intended to cover the extra costs of disability. Individuals can claim Pip regardless of whether they are in full-time education or have a job. Eligibility is based on how a physical or mental condition affects the claimant's ability to complete everyday tasks and get around.

Sir Keir Starmer ordered a review of Pip by Sir Stephen Timms, the disability minister, after the government was forced by a rebellion on the Labour back benches last year to abandon welfare reforms. Under present conditions, the cost of Pip is expected to rise to more than £41 billion a year by 2030. An initial review said it was "unclear if other forms of support would be more effective", leaving open the possibility that cash could be replaced in some cases by therapy, employment support or physical aids.

Timms also found that only half of those claiming Pip stayed in work after they started receiving the benefit. Although some will have stopped work because their condition deteriorated or they retired, the report cited evidence that in some cases disability benefits had "disincentivised" employment by giving claimants an "alternative source of income".

The review was clear that money would always be an option for some claimants. Timms told MPs this year that the government would not be "moving away" from providing money to disabled people to help with their extra living costs, but said the review was looking at whether some claimants could be pointed to other, non-financial forms of support.

The Good Growth Foundation is led by Praful Nargund, who is also a skills adviser to Pat McFadden, the work and pensions secretary. It polled 1,000 disability benefit claimants across ages and with varying disabilities.

The poll found that 19 per cent of Pip recipients would trade £50 per week of their cash benefit for home support such as a carer. Overlapping groups of respondents also showed interest in

Continued on page 2

MIKE EGERTON/PA

Gold mine Amy Hunt won an unprecedented fourth gold medal as she anchored the mixed 4x100m relay team to victory in the European Championships Page 52

Girls and boys may just be different, says exams expert

Nicola Woolcock Education Editor

Girls and boys may have inherent differences in ability that lead them to excel in different subjects, an education professor has said before GCSE results this week.

The government should investigate whether the education system is letting down boys, Professor Alan Smithers, director of education at Buckingham University, believes. He said he was making the comments despite cancel culture being in "overdrive".

He also said a "major overhaul" of secondary education would be needed if Andy Burnham wanted to introduce more vocational qualifications for pupils aged 14. This is because earlier attempts to create technical GCSEs had not succeeded, he said.

Hundreds of thousands of teenagers will receive GCSE results on Thursday in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. England grades them from 1 to 9 and the other countries still use an alphabetical system. Smithers said ministers should also look at the reasons for pupils in Northern Ireland doing better at GCSEs than their peers in England and Wales.

Across the three countries, 21.9 per cent of entries were awarded the top grades last year — at least a 7 or an A grade, up from 21.8 per cent in 2024. In 2019, the last year before the pandemic, 20.8 per cent of entries achieved the top grades.

Smithers questioned whether girls might have an "inherent advantage" in some subjects and boys in others such as maths and statistics. Of the 47 GCSE subject categories, boys do better in just seven: maths, statistics, physics, economics, "other sciences", "other technology" and maths numeracy.

Previously, some experts have speculated that boys develop later on average, which is why they pull ahead at top grades in A-levels overall.

However, girls achieve more of the top grades at GCSE — last year 24.5 per cent of girls' GCSE entries were

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News

Today's highlights

7.00am **Matthew Pennycook**, housing and planning minister
7.35am The shadow housing and communities secretary **James Cleverly**
12.30pm The novelist **Irvine Welsh**, right
1pm The diplomat and environmental activist **John Ashton**
3.15pm **Bobby Duffy**, professor of public policy at King's College, on why public perception of crime is at odds with reality

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TODAY'S EDITION

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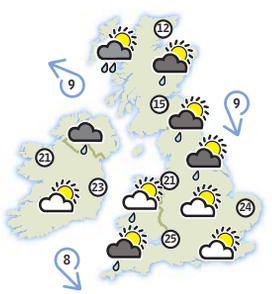

Warm and sunny in the southeast. Cloudy with outbreaks of rain elsewhere. **Full forecast, page 45**

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Reform pledge to ban welfare benefits for foreign claimants

Aubrey Allegretti
Chief Political Correspondent
Seren Hughes

More than one million foreigners living in Britain would be banned from claiming almost all benefits under a Reform UK government.

Robert Jenrick, the party's Treasury spokesman, said the move would contribute to wider plans to save more than £50 billion in welfare spending to tackle an "immoral" situation.

The ban would cover European Union citizens with settled status, which would require a renegotiation of the Brexit deal with Brussels and trigger a reciprocal move being levied on British expatriates. It could save about £21 billion annually by the fifth year of the scheme, Reform claimed.

The party had previously pledged to ban foreigners from claiming universal credit, but the new proposal covers almost all welfare payments including housing, jobseeker's allowance, child benefit and disability benefits. An estimated 1.3 million foreigners claim universal credit, along with several hundred thousand others who claim individual or multiple other benefits.

Speaking before the announcement today, Jenrick said: "Forcing British workers to pay for the benefits of foreigners is not just economically illiterate but plain immoral.

"People are more than happy to support their neighbours in hard times, but the British taxpayer cannot afford to subsidise everyone on the planet, especially those who have not paid in."

However, the plan to strip benefits from EU citizens with settled status would require difficult negotiations. Reform acknowledged that Britons living in the bloc could lose their rights to benefits. The party has estimated a cost of £500 million for expatriates returning to the UK and claiming welfare.

The plan is one of a series of proposals from Jenrick, who defected from the Conservative party in January.

The Newark MP has already set out plans to transform sickness and disability benefits to cut £22 billion from the welfare bill. These include scrapping personal independence payments (Pip) and health-related payments under universal credit. They would be replaced by a health security allowance only for severe cases and a single in-person assessment to screen out "vexatious and fraudulent claims".

However, Labour said Jenrick's pledge to bar foreigners from claiming benefits would be unfair on those who had built lives in Britain. A spokesman said: "These plans would mean ripping up the UK's withdrawal agreement with the EU, plunging the UK back into years of Brexit renegotiations and stripping support from potentially millions of people who have lawfully lived, worked and paid taxes in Britain for years, and in many cases decades."

The spokesman added the "vast majority" of migrants had no access to benefits and that ministers were already reforming the welfare system.

Helen Whately, the shadow work and pensions secretary, claimed Jenrick's plans were an attempt to distract attention from the investigation into an undeclared £5 million gift to Farage and the "pointless by-election" in Clacton, which he won on Friday.

She said: "Reform UK have spent months flip-flopping on the two-child cap and now they've rushed out a cobbled-together announcement which is already unravelling. Their proposals will drag Britain back into Brexit battles with no certainty or success."

Blair and Kushner in Israel for talks on Gaza peace

Gabrielle Weiniger Israel Correspondent

Sir Tony Blair and Jared Kushner met Hamas leaders in Egypt yesterday before a meeting in Jerusalem with senior Israeli officials over the stalled peace plan for Gaza.

The meeting in Cairo was called to push the Islamist group to give up their weapons in order to advance the peace plan in Gaza, according to two sources quoted by Axios.

The former prime minister and President Trump's son-in-law are in the region in an attempt to salvage the peace deal struck in October to end the war and rebuild the territory. Hamas also sent officials, including its new chief, Khalil al-Hayya, to the Egyptian capital.

The US has in the past negotiated directly with the Islamist group both to free Israeli hostages who had been captured on October 7 and, more recently, to try to enforce its disarmament.

Kushner met President Sisi of Egypt yesterday, hours after Hayya met Cairo's spymaster. Kushner and Hayya, who were both in the Mediterranean city of El Alamein, held separate talks on the implementation of Trump's postwar plan for Gaza.

The meeting between Kushner and Sisi "emphasised the need for all parties to fulfill their obligations under the Gaza Strip ceasefire agreement", according to an Egyptian spokesman.

Last week Binyamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, openly rejected the peace plan for the first time, saying that his country was in discussions with the US over which elements were "acceptable" to Israel. The Israeli military controls much of Gaza and its border lands, and has said it will not withdraw until Hamas fully disarms.

Eight Muslim countries condemned Israel's rejection of Trump's Gaza peace plan. In a joint statement the foreign ministries of the UAE, Qatar, Jordan, Indonesia, Pakistan, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt accused Israel of undermining efforts to end the war with Hamas.

Hamas said after the meeting with Blair and Kushner that it had asked the Board of Peace to "compel" Israel to accept the Gaza peace plan.

Despite the declared truce, deadly strikes on Gaza have continued. A week-long pause was broken last Wednesday when Israel struck a vehicle in northern Gaza, killing one and wounding five others.

Settler violence tests US-Israeli alliance, pages 24-25

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Disabled open to less benefit

other areas. Sixteen per cent wanted physiotherapy and healthy meals, and 15 per cent would choose home adaptations.

Donna, 58, from the northwest of England, uses a wheelchair and requires significant mobility assistance. She was let go from her job because she could not travel to the office.

She told the survey that the benefit system should work "like the Paralympics", recognising that everyone's needs are different and that meeting them could get more people into work.

She said: "Everyone's disability is unique, but we get boxed into two categories — can work and can't work — then get given a small stipend and are left to our own devices. By offering services that we would choose, rather than just cash, schemes like this could get me cheaper help around the house or help me get the job I want."

Louisa Dollimore, director of strategy at the Good Growth Foundation, said: "Our research shows many people don't just want cash, they want services which will help them get on in life."

The Department for Work and Pensions said: "The government has committed to reforming Pip and has commissioned the Timms review, co-produced with disabled people, to ensure it is fit for the future. Their final report is due later this year."

Line closed for ten days after derailment

The railway between Lewes and Haywards Heath will remain closed "for at least another ten days" after a Southern Rail train came off the tracks in East Sussex on Thursday, seriously injuring two passengers. Another 18 passengers have since left hospital.

The Rail Accident Investigation Branch completed its work at the site on Saturday and has handed it back to Network Rail while its investigation continues.

Network Rail and Southern Rail said three carriages "derailed and slid partway down the embankment" and that these will "need to be carefully lifted away by crane". They said the location made this difficult because the line is close to a river, in a site of special scientific interest and the restricted road access was through a residential area.

Once the train has been removed, engineers will be able to assess the damage to the railway and "understand the scale of the repair work needed before services can resume safely".

In a statement yesterday they said: "Customers travelling next week, and in the weeks ahead, are advised to check before they travel and, where possible, use alternative train services."

John Whitehurst, chief executive of Greater Thameslink Railway, which operates Southern Railway, said: "We recognise the impact this incident will have on customers' journeys in the days ahead, and we're working closely with Network Rail to do everything we can to keep customers moving while recovery work continues and the railway is restored safely. We know this recovery effort is not only affecting rail customers, but also local communities around Lewes, and I'd like to thank them for their patience and understanding while our teams work to restore the railway."

Farmers ordered to use less water on their crops, page 10

SONJA HORSMAN FOR THE TIMES

Britain's new chess queen, taking on the world aged 11

Bodhana Sivanandan is already tipped to become the country's greatest ever player, **Mario Ledwith** writes

After Bodhana Sivanandan deployed her final move, forcing her opponent to reach across the chessboard to offer her hand in defeat, the commentary team could not have been more rapturous.

"Unreal," eulogised Daniel Gormally, himself a chess grandmaster, after the play-off. "Bodhana, or Godhana as I call her, has won yet again, astonishing."

The victory made Bodhana Britain's youngest ever women's chess champion at the age of just 11, adding to an already dizzying list of records, all achieved before she has enrolled at secondary school.

Gormally's divine nickname is backed up by the roll call of leading male figures in the game who she has already seen off, sometimes while sitting on a booster seat.

Bodhana Sivanandan defeated Trisha Kanyamarala, 14, left, on her way to winning the women's title this month. Right, with her mother, Lakshmy Priya, and the trophy

The schoolgirl's ascent in a game she took up only six years ago has seen her described as Britain's greatest ever chess prodigy. Some experts predict she will become Britain's greatest ever player.

The weight of expectation does not faze the youngster, whose expectations match those of her fans. "I'm happy about the title but I want to keep going for more in the future," Bodhana said of her British title victory at the University of Warwick this month.

In her sights is not just the greatest honour in chess, but a desire to achieve it at a younger age than anybody has before. "I want to become a grandmaster as soon as possible," she told The Times.

At the British championships, which took place over nine days, Bodhana performed like a seasoned professional.

During her winning streak, she beat Ameet Ghasi, a 39-year-old grandmaster, her fourth win over a player with that honour. The chess master and broadcaster Leonard Barden described her display as the "female equivalent of Bobby Fischer's 1956 Game of the Century against Donald Byrne".

Her only defeat during the championship came to Shreyas Royal, 17, a fellow prodigy who went on to win the overall British championship.

In claiming the women's title, Bodhana broke a record set by Elaine Pritchard in 1939, who was 13.

Bodhana's gateway into the game lay in a bag of discarded items left by a family friend in her home in Harrow, north London, during the pandemic. Poking out was a chessboard. "I was fascinated by how the pieces looked, especially the knight and the queen, and I wanted to use them as toys outside of chess," she said.

"But then my dad told me that if I did that then the next person who got the chessboard wouldn't be able to play chess properly."

Her father, Sivanandan Velayutham, who studied engineering and works in IT, had intended to donate the board but acted on his daughter's interest. Despite having only a basic knowledge of chess, he decided to show his daughter the ropes.

The novice honed her skills by watching YouTube tutorials on the site, as well as on chess.com, and had soon surpassed her father's meagre skills.

She entered her first tournament in July 2021, playing at Harrow Chess Club, and a year later had established herself as a winning machine.

At the European Schools Championship in May 2022, aged only seven, she won all of her 24 matches and walked away with three golds.

By 2023, it was clear that competing against her contemporaries was too easy. So she started taking scalps from those with decades more experience. That year she became the youngest person to avoid defeat against a grandmaster in a competitive game at the European Rapid and Blitz chess tournaments in Croatia.

Her ascendancy in the sport will continue next year when she enrolls in secondary school, where a request will be submitted for special dispensation to travel to international events.

During term time, she tries to squeeze in at least an hour or two of chess per day. She also plays violin and piano.

Her career is supported by her parents who take it in turns to travel to tournaments with her. Watching the British championships at home was Lakshmy Priya who described herself as a "happy mum".

Leon Watson, editor of worldchess.com, said: "She's Britain's best young sports star and if the game had a higher profile in the UK Bodhana would be a household name already.

"She will be in five years. Everyone will know her name. She will be a world champion."

Young champions highlight growing popularity of chess, leading article, page 23

Ferrari's unloved e-car sells for £30m

Millie Turner

Ferrari's first, supposedly unpopular, all-electric car has been auctioned for $40 million (£29.6 million), becoming the most expensive new car ever sold.

The Luce, which outsold a unique McLaren F1 GTR at $34.6 million in the same auction, was described as "an aesthetic and technological insult to anyone who loves Ferrari" by a former company executive.

It was mocked for its minimalist aesthetic and compared to the modest Nissan Leaf.

Created in collaboration with Sir Jony Ive, famous for designing the iPhone, the car largely met derision when unveiled in May, triggering an 8 per cent fall in Ferrari's share price.

It is a four-door saloon with four electric motors and a 122kWh battery, which offers a top speed of 190mph. It can reach 62mph in 2.5 seconds and has a range of 329 miles when fully charged.

Despite the backlash, the Maranello carmaker raised a huge sum at the Monterey Car Week in California over the weekend as part of a charity auction. Proceeds will be donated to "elevating global education initiatives" via the Ferrari Foundation.

The "tailor-made" version of the car was expected to fetch about £750,000.

Bids for the Luce started at $1 million and climbed quickly, sometimes in increments as big as $5 million.

No buyer's name has been disclosed, but the purchaser is rumoured to have been a Silicon Valley billionaire close to the project, such as Apple's Tim Cook or the entrepreneur Laurene Powell Jobs, according to The Daily Telegraph.

Although it marks a record sale for a new car, it is not the most expensive car ever sold. Three years ago a vintage 1962 Ferrari 250 GTO was bought for £42 million.

Champion biker who broke his back revs up for record

Will Humphries

Sam Sunderland was aiming to complete the fastest circumnavigation of the world on a motorcycle when he landed on his head during a training ride, breaking his back in three places.

"I just heard a big crunch and a lot of pain, so that was a nice trip to the hospital," the British biking champion said.

After a year of gruelling rehabilitation, he is back in the saddle of his Triumph motorcycle and ready to attempt to cover more than 18,000 miles in less than 19 days, 8 hours and 25 minutes.

That record, set in 2002 by the British husband and wife, Kevin and Julia Sanders, is no longer recognised by the Guinness World Records organisation because of safety concerns.

Sunderland, 37, from Poole, Dorset, a double Dakar Rally champion, aims to beat it, despite still feeling aches in his back on a recent eight-hour trial run.

Sunderland will set off from London on September 5 and have to average about 58 mph for 16 hours a day. While travelling more than 1,000 miles a day.

"I've still got some niggles and stuff but you can't break your back and be back to 100 per cent so quick, but it's mostly OK," he said.

Sunderland's record attempt can be followed at redbull.com.

News

TIMES PHOTOGRAPHER JAMES GLOSSOP

Sands of time Tibetan Tashi Lhunpo monks created a mandala of Tara, a Buddhist figure often referred to as "The Mother of All Buddhas" in the Gallery room at Harewood House in West Yorkshire. Constructed out of millions of grains of coloured sand as a form of meditation, it was ritually destroyed on Saturday

Warnings of cancer care delay as 'quarter of GP referrals rejected'

James Beal Investigations Editor

Patients with cancer symptoms are at risk of having their treatment delayed due to the rejection of GP referrals, doctors have warned.

A survey of 712 GPs in England found that over a quarter of attempted referrals by doctors were rejected and returned as unwanted "advice and guidance" that they had not requested. This included rejections for patients referred for red-flag suspected cancer symptoms, increasing the chances of them failing to be seen within NHS fast-track treatment deadlines.

More than a third of the bouncebacks asked doctors to do work considered outside their remit, research showed.

Dr Clare Bannon, chair of the British Medical Association GPs committee, said: "Where a referral is requested hospital trusts are contractually obliged to accept referrals from general practice, except in very limited circumstances. Referrals should not simply be rejected with requests for additional GP actions unless part of a locally agreed pathway."

The survey by the health magazine Pulse found that an average of 26 per cent of attempted referrals to secondary care were being returned as unsolicited advice and guidance (A&G).

GPs warned the expansion of A&G was prolonging referrals, increasing patient frustration and creating additional work. Others said they were having to hold further discussions with patients to explain why referrals had not been accepted.

A&G is an NHS service designed to allow GPs to seek specialist advice before a referral. But GPs reported referrals being converted into A&G that they had not requested. This meant patients they had intended to refer to hospital were returned to their GP with specialist advice. GPs also estimated that 36 per cent of the A&G they received asked them to undertake work they considered outside their remit.

One GP in northeast England warned that A&G was creating "increasing barriers to two-week-wait gastrointestinal referrals" for patients with red-flag suspected cancer symptoms.

Another GP, in London, said increasing difficulties getting referrals accepted had contributed to her decision to retire from general practice because she felt the system was becoming "more risky and unsafe".

The NHS is undergoing a major expansion of A&G and GP practices are now contractually required to use the service across specialties "prior to or in place of a planned care referral where clinically appropriate".

A government neighbourhood health framework said there was an ambition for 25 per cent of GP referrals to be diverted through A&G by 2027. However, Dr Amanda Doyle, NHS England national primary care director, said in April that there was no target to divert "a fixed proportion of referrals away from hospital care".

The survey also found GPs wanted an average of ten days for secondary care to respond to A&G requests, despite hospital trusts being required to respond within five working days.

Dr Munro Stewart, vice-president of the Royal College of GPs, said: "It's vital that [referrals] are taken seriously — especially when relating to potentially serious conditions, such as cancers."

The Department of Health said: "[A&G] is helping more patients to receive timely and appropriate care in primary and community settings, and that is one of the reasons 77 per cent of patients are now reporting a 'good' overall experience with their GP."

The NHS said: "A&G is a successful way of giving patients earlier input from an expert consultant, while still allowing them to be seen in hospital if needed."

'Inherent differences' explain why girls get better GCSEs

Continued from page 1

awarded at least a grade 7/A compared with 19.4 per cent of boys.

He said his requests for the gender gap to be investigated were perhaps "against the vibes of the time when the emphasis is on equality for women".

He added: "I have been thinking the unthinkable in these days when the cancel culture is in overdrive.

"The sex differences in education achievement are so persistent they could be inherent differences. This should be taken on board in any inquiry."

The least frequently taken GCSEs include practical subjects such as leisure and tourism, hospitality and construction and he questioned whether the current form of GCSEs was "capable of delivering hands-on practical training to industry standards".

"The new government has been musing whether the 14-16 curriculum should place more emphasis on practical skills," he said. "This is a very good idea which I was arguing for 35 years ago.

"It attracted a lot of interest, but as far as policy formation was concerned it went nowhere. That could have been for many reasons, but one rarely mentioned is, I suspect, at the root of it.

"It is that schools are just not very good at providing the practical education that is needed, because they lack the specialist teachers, the equipment and can't keep pace with developments.

"If the government wishes to rebalance the Key Stage 4 curriculum, there is a strong case for a thorough review. A successful transformation of Key Stage 4 would require a major overhaul."

The Department for Education said: "From September 2028, technical subjects will be available to 14-year-olds, helping build the skilled workforce our economy needs."

Remember, education is a lifelong process, Libby Purves, page 21

Quintagram® No 2648

Solve all five concise clues using each letter underneath once only

1 Raise (4)

_ _ _ _

2 Small gap in a schedule (6)

_ _ _ _ _ _

3 Retaining (7)

_ _ _ _ _ _ _

4 Racing official (7)

_ _ _ _ _ _ _

5 Discuss work socially (4,4)

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

A	A	D	D	E	E	E	F
G	H	I	I	I	K	K	L
L	N	N	O	O	P	P	R
S	S	T	T	T	W	W	W

Solutions see MindGames
Cryptic clues see MindGames

Asylum hotel stabbing

Abdifatah Yusuf Adani, 22, from Somalia, will appear at Staines magistrates' court today charged with attempted murder after a member of staff was stabbed at a hotel used to house migrants in Stanwell, Surrey. The staff member at the Stanwell Hotel, who is in his thirties, was taken to hospital on Saturday evening and is in a stable condition.

Kidney transplant hope

Doctors are to start double matching the white and red blood cells of donors to kidney transplant patients, which will reduce the chance of the new organ being rejected. About two out of five transplant patients need blood transfusions and the new system could reduce the waiting time for a new kidney and save lives.

Head-on crash kills five

Five teenagers have died and four other people have been seriously injured in a head-on collision involving a car driving the wrong way on a motorway in Ireland. Garda Commissoner Justin Kelly described the crash on the M9 in Co Kildare at 3am yesterday as "horrific". Three women and a child in the second car were being treated for serious injuries.

Victims criticise the Met

The Metropolitan Police has been accused of failing in its legal duty to victims of human trafficking at the hands of Mohamed Al Fayed, the late owner of Harrods, because the force did not refer them to the National Referral Mechanism, the framework for identifying victims of slavery and trafficking. The Met was asked for comment.

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Murder investigation after man 'in altercation' attacked by dog

Mario Ledwith

Police have launched a murder investigation after a man was attacked by a German shepherd dog during an altercation on a footpath in West Yorkshire.

A 55-year-old victim was found in a critical condition at the former railway line in the Calder Grove area of Wakefield after police were alerted to the dispute at 1.36pm on Saturday.

Detectives from West Yorkshire police believe that the man, who later died from his injuries in hospital that night, was attacked by the dog during the incident.

Officers arrested a man, also aged 55, at the scene of the incident on suspicion of murder and being the owner of a dog dangerously out of control in a public place causing injury. He remained in police custody yesterday as officers launched an appeal for two people who stopped to help the victim to come forward with information.

The dog believed to have been involved in the incident has been seized.

Images from the scene on Saturday showed ambulances and police cars in attendance. The rural footpath is surrounded by agricultural land.

Detective Chief Inspector Michael Cox, of the homicide and major inquiry team, said: "Sadly, a man has died and it is really important we understand the circumstances of what has taken place.

"We know that two people, one named Sophie, stopped to assist the injured man and direct officers. We would urge these two women to come forward to help us with our ongoing inquiries into this tragic incident.

"The initial altercation has happened in an area used by walkers and we are urging anyone who has potentially seen or heard any part of the exchange between these two men to please make contact."

New legislation around dangerous dogs was put before parliament earlier this year after a rise in attacks linked to certain breeds such as XL bullies. This will seek to ban children under 12 from being left alone with certain breeds designated as unsafe.

Although relatively small, the number of UK deaths from dog attacks has been rising. In April, Maggie-May Ann Moody, a three-month-old girl, died in Redcar, North Yorkshire, after being attacked by a dog. That month, 19-year-old Jamie-Lea Biscoe died from neck injuries after a dog attack inside her home in Great Dunmow, Essex.

Also in April, Lila Hall, 78, was killed after being attacked by two Rottweiler-type dogs in Wolverhampton.

General dog attacks on people in England and Wales have rose to 31,920 in 2024, a 2 per cent increase on 2023.

Arday inquiry 'should carry on,' says his professor friend

Nicola Woolcock Education Editor

The University of Cambridge should press ahead with its investigation into how Jason Arday was appointed and his time teaching, according to his friend and former colleague.

Sir Simon Baron-Cohen said that it was important to see what could be learnt from the appointment of Arday, who was found dead on Friday. He had resigned from his post as professor of sociology of education earlier this month after allegations of plagiarism were made against him.

Before his death, the university said it would investigate the circumstances around his "appointment and tenure", and the findings would feed into a review of the appointments process for appointing senior roles.

It is understood that the university does not feel it is right to make a decision on whether to proceed with its investigation while the academic's family are grieving.

Baron-Cohen, a clinical psychologist, told Times Radio that the university and organisations, including the media, should "always be reflecting on how it's operating and whether it can do better".

The professor and director of the Autism Research Centre said: "They have announced an investigation and we should let that proceed. We should see what we learn from it. This is the whole purpose of investigations. When you're talking about what's in the public interest, when you've got public bodies like universities or, arguably, the media, political institutions, whatever, when we have investigations, it's all about how can we improve them."

Baron-Cohen said Arday's mental health had been left "in tatters", adding that there were questions over whether the media failed in its duty of care towards him as a vulnerable person with disabilities.

He said that the professor faced racist abuse and was used as a "lightning rod for a culture war on DEI [diversity, equity and inclusion]".

Baron-Cohen said that Arday "started reporting racism within weeks of him being at Cambridge", adding: "It included things like threats of physical assault to himself and his family, racist hate speech, and racist actions, hate actions."

Baron-Cohen explained his decision to withdraw his signature from a solidarity letter in support of Arday, organised by the Good Law Project, saying: "When my university announced the investigation, a number of us in Cambridge felt that if we were going to contribute or be called to give evidence in an investigation, we should separate ourselves from any simplistic narrative. And the Just Law Project was primarily only focusing on one of those factors, which was racism.

"I think that there were a number of intertwined factors. As academics we try to approach things in a very balanced way. I felt that that petition was no longer balanced."

Arday said that he was non-verbal until the age of 11 and unable to read and write until the age of 18. He was awarded a PhD at Liverpool John Moores University and worked at Durham and Glasgow universities before moving to Cambridge.

In the past month, his appointments came under scrutiny as allegations were made that parts of his PhD appeared to be plagiarised. Some of his sporting achievements may have been exaggerated or fabricated.

Lord Woolley of Woodford, the principal of Homerton College, Cambridge, and a former mentor, told BBC Radio 4's *Broadcasting House* programme said Arday felt "hounded to death".

Woolley said: "In a conversation I had with Jason on the Monday — we met on Monday, with a few dear friends — he said he felt hounded to death, his words, that he couldn't see a way out." He added: "On that day, we saw a man half his body weight and desperate beyond belief."

The crossbench peer said that Arday had been subjected to "the most horrendous, toxic, vicious witch hunt" and called for an investigation into the "vicious media onslaught".

He added: "The whole of the black community and black academics have been brought into this debate as though we don't belong in these positions."

A fundraiser for Arday's family, set up by the Windrush campaigner Sir Patrick Vernon, has raised more than £100,000. Stand Up To Racism has announced plans for a vigil to be held on the steps of the National Gallery in Trafalgar Square, central London, at 6pm today.

On Saturday, Andy Burnham described the professor's death as a "tragedy on so many levels".

In a statement issued by his publisher Simon & Schuster UK, Arday's family said that he had been subjected to a "campaign of sustained abuse". They said: "The campaign of misinformation was too much for Jason, who was a gentle man and who always wanted to see the best in everyone."

Public scrutiny and the death of Arday, letters, page 22
Obituary, page 41

NORDIN CATIC/GETTY IMAGES

Tributes to Jason Arday were placed outside the University of Cambridge's Senate House yesterday

Actress who quit Strictly settles claim against BBC

Will Humphries

The actress Amanda Abbington has reached a settlement with the BBC over bullying allegations she made about her time on *Strictly Come Dancing*.

The dancing programme was the subject of an internal review in 2024 after Abbington, 54, alleged that her professional partner, Giovanni Pernice, 35, had bullied and harassed her during the competition in the previous year.

The Italian dancing professional rejected "any claim of threatening or abusive behaviour" and welcomed the conclusion of the review, in which the corporation upheld six of Abbington's 17 complaints against him, some of which were for using swear words.

The BBC upheld accusations of bullying and harassment, but cleared him of accusations of physical aggression. She had pulled out of the competition after seven weeks because of a health scare.

"It was a litany of being verbally abused, sexual innuendo, sexual gestures. There was a 35- minute rant at me," she said on BBC's *Newsnight* in October 2024. "This went on for seven hours a day for seven weeks." Pernice admitted he could get frustrated, but denied all accusations of abuse.

Amanda Abbington quit the dancing show alleging she had been bullied

It is understood that the out-of-court settlement with Abbington, who starred in *Sherlock*, was a five-figure sum and was paid by BBC Studios, meaning the funds did not come from the licence fee.

A source told The Sun: "Amanda's friends and family are all relieved for her that this ordeal is finally over"

After the review, the BBC introduced a series of measures aimed at improving welfare on the show, including the introduction of a chaperone present "at all times" in training room rehearsals.

Pernice went on to join the Italian equivalent of Strictly, *Ballando Con Le Stelle*, which he won in 2024 with the actress and singer Bianca Guaccero.

Strictly is preparing for its next series, which airs in September, with three new hosts — the broadcaster Emma Willis, the comedian Josh Widdicombe and the former professional dancer Johannes Radebe — replacing Tess Daly and Claudia Winkleman.

The BBC declined to comment on the settlement.

Representatives for Abbington have been contacted for comment.

Mordaunt among Tory ex-MPs in reselection limbo

Dame Penny Mordaunt, right, faces delays as the Tories put ex-ministers through a reselection process, including questions on net zero and ECHR. Kemi Badenoch's party, above, has now blocked Grant Shapps's candidacy, below

Aubrey Allegretti
Chief Political Correspondent

A former cabinet minister is among several ex-Conservative MPs who have faced a weeks-long delay to find out if they can stand for the party again at the next election.

Penny Mordaunt, the former defence secretary who lost her Portsmouth North seat two years ago, has applied to join the party's candidates list.

She and other ex-MPs were told to expect a decision by the end of June, but have waited weeks for an update on their future. The delay was branded a mess by sitting MPs, who privately criticised the "poor way former colleagues are being treated".

However, a spokesman for the party said that there would be no "special treatment" or fast-tracking, even for friends of the leader Kemi Badenoch.

Former Tory MPs have been forced to re-apply from scratch and several of them have completed an interview and a six-hour assessment day.

They are under particular scrutiny and the Conservatives' chief whip is feeding in views, including on how collegial previous colleagues were.

The process has resulted in at least one senior Tory — the ex-cabinet minister and party chair Grant Shapps — being barred from re-election, according to reports.

One MP said they were "utterly shocked" by the decision. "It just looks petty and unnecessary. The whole thing is a total clusterf***," they added. Another said: "It seems to have been a chaotic mess — particularly when it concerns former MPs. It's not nice to see former colleagues being treated poorly."

Those still in limbo after completing both elements of the process included a former party chair and vice-chair.

A Conservative party spokesman said: "We are treating everyone equally and fairly, whether or not they are new to the party or a former cabinet minister.

"Kemi has been insistent that there is no special treatment for anyone, not even her own friends. People must see the Conservative Party has changed."

The hold-up is said to be due to the focus on Andy Burnham after Labour's abrupt leadership change, coinciding with reduced staffing over the summer.

It is affecting all applications and insiders stress that it is not a reflection of issues with any specific individual, regardless of whether they were an MP.

Badenoch has sought to ensure potential candidates will subscribe to some of her key changes to the party's policy platform: including pledging to pull Britain out of the European Convention on Human Rights and scrapping "impossible" net zero targets.

The Conservative leader has rung several former ex-MPs to quiz them on their views on the two areas.

Badenoch's popularity has risen over the past year. Briefings against her from within the party have decreased after the defection of four MPs to Reform

Joshua Bonehill-Paine, a former neo-Nazi, is now an adviser to Kemi Badenoch

UK. YouGov polling found 38 per cent of Britons say she is doing well as leader and 27 per cent see her as the prime minister in waiting, up from 15 per cent and 8 per cent respectively last October.

The party's performance in opinion polls has slightly improved, but it has struggled to overtake Labour or Reform.

However, Badenoch has come under pressure in recent weeks over the decision to offer Joshua Bonehill-Paine, a former neo-Nazi, a role as an anti-extremism adviser to the party.

Though Badenoch said he had served a prison sentence and deserved a second chance having repudiated those views, the decision has angered some in the One Nation caucus.

One party source said: "How are we OK with ex-neo Nazis, but not with net zero?" Another added: "A conservatism that gains votes from Reform is an improvement, but not a sufficient one to chart any path back to government. You don't need to go full Cameroon, but you do need people who appeal to Lib Dem and Labour voters. Who are they?"

Part of the reason for ensuring potential MPs subscribe to Badenoch's policy platform is avoiding factionalism plaguing the party after the next election.

"We can't have a repeat of the Five Families," said one person involved in the candidate selection, referencing the term coined in late 2023 for an informal alliance of caucuses within the party.

In an effort to professionalise the process, businesspeople with some experience of recruitment have been brought in to help with the candidate interview process.

In addition to questions about their commitment to the party, candidates are sometimes asked to give examples of where they have acted with integrity.

Tory associations have been put on standby and asked if they are ready to select a candidate.

The party has identified an initial 11 areas where approved candidates can apply. They include Newark, the seat of Robert Jenrick, a former minister, who defected to Reform in January; North East Hampshire, previously a Tory stronghold; and narrowly-lost battleground constituencies such as Hendon.

A source said: "Anyone who passes through the process with an individual pass should be someone that the party is happy to have as an MP at the next election. In the past, this was not always the case.

"It partly reflects the fact that everything is so up in the air in terms of political fragmentation that we may win seats we don't expect to, and not win those we expect to. So everyone needs to be ready to be a good MP straight away."

MPs are feeling generally buoyant about the party's prospects and the party's conference in October is said to be "over-subscribed".

Drive to build more homes near stations

Aubrey Allegretti

Angela Rayner has rewritten planning rules to make it easier for thousands more homes to be built near railway stations.

In a move to reduce dependency on cars, there will be a "default yes" for developments within walking distance of train, tram and Tube stops.

The changes will come into effect immediately in an updated version of the national planning policy framework, due to be published today.

Government sources told The Times they were designed to reduce car dependency and boost demand for public transport over time, increasing the case for further investment.

Rayner, reappointed as housing secretary last month, is seeking to catch up on her target of building 1.5 million homes in England during this parliament. An estimated 392,400 net additional dwellings were added to England's housing stock in Labour's first 23 months in office, about two thirds the pace required to hit the target.

Last night senior Tories accused ministers of "failing abysmally" on housebuilding and urged them to focus on enforcing planning rules to protect communities from illegal Traveller sites.

New analysis showed that the number of caravans on unauthorised sites without planning permission on Travellers' own land rose by 35 per cent from July 2024 to January this year.

The Tories said the government was letting a minority of Travellers who break the rules get away with retrospectively applying for planning permission, creating a "two-tier" system.

Rayner's changes to planning rules will give default approval for homes built within "reasonable walking distance of well-connected stations".

It will also be made harder for developers to turn pubs into flats or shops, by forcing them to prove there is no reasonable prospect of keeping the existing business afloat before a change of use can be considered.

The shake-up will also cut bureaucracy by ending the statutory requirement to consult some organisations on development decisions.

Under the new system Sport England will continue to advise on "significant" cases and the Gardens Trust and Theatres Trust will only be notified about relevant applications.

John Healey, the chancellor, said the steps would help to "drive growth in every postcode and help more working people into home ownership".

Lammy gets to keep his top London address

Aubrey Allegretti

David Lammy has been given the rest of summer to enjoy his grace-and-favour residence in the heart of Westminster weeks after he was sacked in Andy Burnham's reshuffle.

The former deputy prime minister was allowed to retain the use of Carlton Gardens until the start of September.

Metres from Buckingham Palace, the taxpayer-funded stuccoed mansion overlooking St James's Park has been occupied by Lammy since soon after the general election in 2024. It followed the tradition of One Carlton Gardens being allocated to the foreign secretary.

However, Lammy held on to it in last September's reshuffle, when he was moved to the role of justice secretary. He was also given the title of deputy prime minister by Sir Keir Starmer, in recompense for having lost out on one of the four "great offices of state".

The Times can reveal that unlike on previous occasions, when ministers have been forced to swiftly pack up and move out after a reshuffle, Lammy has been spared a swift exit back to his constituency home in Tottenham. One Labour source said it made sense to give Lammy a "period of grace to move on". Another said it was "a sweetener for being sacked".

Some ministers have in the past been reluctant to leave. Boris Johnson took three weeks to move out of the property after quitting as foreign secretary under Theresa May. When Robin Cook

LUCY YOUNG FOR THE TIMES; KARL BLACK/ALAMY; TOLGA AKMEN/EPA

was demoted to Commons leader in 2001, he was also allowed to hang on to a "granny flat" above the new occupant in Carlton Gardens for two years.

It is among the most coveted in a portfolio of properties occupied by senior members of the cabinet in and around Westminster. The residences enable ministers to live close to their office, allowing for early and late working, as well as unpredictable travel arrangements.

The precedent of foreign secretaries using One Carlton Gardens was first set in 1945 by Ernest Bevin, who served under Clement Attlee.

The grade II listed building was acquired on lease from the Crown Estate.

Dating back to about 1830, it was renovated after suffering bomb damage in the Second World War, and it has state rooms which tend to be used mostly for official functions on the ground and first floors.

An apartment for the foreign secretary and their family is spread over the second and third floors.

The Times revealed earlier this month that Ed Miliband, the foreign secretary, had now gained exclusive ministerial access to Chevening, a Palladian mansion in 3,000 acres near Sevenoaks, Kent.

Greens focus on pigeons and neurodiverse action

Traditional issues such as the environment seem less of a priority, **Daisy Eastlake** and **Lucy Bannerman** write

Gaza and trans rights may have dominated Green politics in London, but the party's newly elected councillors have been busy tackling a less predictable range of priorities beyond the capital. They have debated pigeon contraception, removed arm rests from benches, celebrated neurodiversity and launched a noble-but-doomed attempt to grant the River Wensum the Freedom of the City of Norwich.

In the local elections in May, the party won 587 seats, beating the previous record total of 483 in 2023, extending its influence over decision-making in cities such as Manchester, Newcastle, Oxford and Cambridge, while also gaining its first councillors on councils including Ipswich, Lincoln, Gateshead and Preston.

One of their first moves in Hastings, after winning overall control of the council for the first time, was to make the seaside town a "neurodiversity friendly and accessible borough". A new Neurodiversity-Friendly Hastings Action Plan will be developed within a year, including measures to review council services and provide training courses to councillors.

Julia Hilton, the Green leader of Hastings borough council, said: "We took a formerly Labour-run council from the edge of bankruptcy to financial stability in our first year, which has meant we've now got money to invest in play and sport and leisure and heritage, including Hastings Castle after years of neglect." Hilton said the neurodiversity changes had already been "making a big difference" to council meetings, which are "not the most exciting of things".

One Hastings councillor, Andy Batsford, stood down from the Labour Party in 2023 because he felt they lacked "policies, support or focus on local government".

He now feels similarly about the Green administration. Batsford said his "main disappointment" was that the party had failed to come in with "transformational" green agendas that deliver for the environment.

The council's main milestones so far include launching a Visit Hastings website and welcoming the first residents to Levett View, a housing development that will provide 86 affordable homes.

In 2021 pay disputes between the Green-run council in Brighton and refuse collectors left tonnes of rubbish uncollected for weeks. Since then "they've just basically looked to run an efficient ship rather than it being anything radical or groundbreaking", Batsford said. "They have been very much tarnished and anchored to that story of the Brighton Greens, crazy Greens, not able to run a council."

In Norwich city council, Labour opposition claim the "crazy Greens" is exactly what they have. Here, one of the Greens' first acts as an administration was to bring forward a review, drawn up by an independent panel, of a boost to the basic allowance paid to every councillor.

RACHEL ADAMS FOR THE TIMES

Zack Polanski, left, at an event for the Greens' Manchester mayoral campaign

This could see the leader's pay allowance rise by 26 per cent. But the review had been tabled first by Labour, was opposed by the Greens last year, and is still open for consultation.

For Carli Harper, the leader of the Labour group, it's the pigeons that have caused the greatest stir. Food traders at the famous market in Norwich city centre say that the birds are wreaking havoc, because too many people are feeding them at the nearby war memorial.

The Greens and a conservation group called Peck Savers have opposed plans to ban pigeon-feeding. "We had one of their candidates turn up to the full council, where this was raised as a petition, in a pigeon mask," Harper said.

Lucy Galvin, the Green leader of the council, said her party "don't oppose managing the pigeons", adding: "Our priority is to work on evidence-based solutions that are effective, good value for money for the public, and are humane."

To solve the problem, some Green councillors have advocated "pigeon contraception". Harper said: "Let's just set aside for a second the feasibility of pigeon contraception, the fact there aren't any products that are licensed as suitable at the moment, but it also would have a massive impact on other bird species."

On pigeon contraception, Galvin said the claim was "mooted", but likely as an option raised "in one meeting". She added: "We haven't put it forward, it's not licensed in this country. So it's not an option frankly."

The Greens have also called for the Freedom of the City of Norwich award, usually given to people making remarkable contributions to the city's life, culture or spirit, to be granted to the local River Wensum. Galvin said they "make no apology for caring about the river", as it is an "incredibly important part of the city". She said what her party had been pushing for was actually charter status, a legal or moral recognition of a river as a living ecosystem, under the ceremonial Freedom of the City title.

But Harper said the proposal had been "bonkers". "It's so performative. It is massive immaturity and naivety but it's also this preoccupation with virtue signalling rather than getting on with the day-to-day practical work it takes to run a council," Harper said.

Mike Stonard, the deputy leader of the Labour group, said he was particularly aggrieved because the party's only action so far on street homelessness was to remove all the armrests from park benches.

"That is immature. It's insulting to street-homeless people ... they [the Greens] had been attacking us for some years over street homelessness, even though we were doing everything we possibly could to ensure accommodation was available," he said.

Galvin denied claims her party did not have serious policy on homelessness, saying it was "absolutely a priority for us to make sure people are adequately housed" and pointed to the council's housebuilding plans.

The Greens in Suffolk do things slightly differently. They've been in control of Mid Suffolk district council for the past three years, holding 23 of the 34 seats. James Caston, a farmer and independent councillor who formerly sat as a Conservative, said the Green authority here was "quite sensible", compared with the newer style of Green politics, which he believed had actually cost the party in Suffolk some support.

"Suffolk Greens are not like national Greens. They've made quite a good brand out of listening to people and going with the actual local issues, residents' issues. They've been quite sensible," he said.

It is environment and nature — 95 per cent of Mid Suffolk is farmland — and opposition to Sizewell C, a 3.2-gigawatt nuclear power station being built on the coastline, that are the galvanising issues here, rather than unisex toilets and anti-zionism.

Caston said the Greens' decision to elect Zack Polanski to lead the party over Adrian Ramsay, a traditional Green and the MP for Waveney Valley, was reminiscent of the selection of Jeremy Corbyn for the Labour leadership in 2015.

"It was Adrian Ramsay, who is electable and more central [to the Green party vision], or Polanski, who is a far-left disruptor. With Ramsay in Suffolk they could well have gone from strength to strength, but it wasn't what the members wanted."

A Green Party spokesman said: "New Green-led councils across the country have hit the ground running and are leading the way in putting residents and local businesses first, taking on vested interests, and investing in quality services with a humanitarian heart.

"We are incredibly proud of all our councillors and councils after we won a record number of seats in May, marking the ninth year in a row of Green gains, and we will continue to fix the messes left by previous administrations so we can rebuild our communities."

SIMON CZAPP/SOLENT NEWS FOR THE TIMES

Annual invasion Buses head for Imber, a village on Salisbury Plain abandoned in 1943 to create a training ground before D-Day. It has been empty ever since and the trip raises money for local charities

One click on a smart TV lets hackers hijack home internet

Mark Sellman
Technology Correspondent

Downloading an app on to your smart TV can allow scammers and hackers to hijack your internet connection, researchers have warned.

About a third of the apps available on LG and Samsung sets enable owners to unwittingly hand over their internet address, a study has shown.

The apps are innocuous, screensavers, clocks or games, but their contents are not, according to Spur Intelligence, a security company.

After downloading the app, the user is given the option to go ad-free if they agree to "web indexing". Part of that agreement, which is rarely read, allows the user's internet connection to be used by someone else who wants to hide their identity. Quite often that is a cybercriminal, scammer or state-sponsored hacker.

Alastair Parr, chief technology officer of Spur, said that often it was a child downloading a game on the smart TV, who did not realise what they had agreed to. "Users are letting somebody masquerade as them and they have no idea what they're being used for. That could be very dodgy, or it might not be," he said.

Spur is helping to lift the lid on a hidden market of buying and selling internet addresses. Often the app is created purely for a company to harvest and sell the addresses. These "proxy" companies say they check that their customers are legitimate. However, Spur says that the buyers just resell again and the connection lands in the hands of bad actors. "It's a great way to do something naughty," Parr said.

In July the FBI seized internet addresses from a "proxy" platform operated by an Israeli company, Alarum Technologies. This platform was linked to the Popa network of more than two million compromised smart home devices that were unwittingly involved in cybercrime and state-sponsored attacks. Alarum said it would "fully co-operate with law enforcement to ensure any misuse of its infrastructure is thoroughly investigated and those responsible are held to account". A similar network called Kimwolf hijacked more than two million devices.

Smart devices such as TVs are being targeted as they are always connected to the internet and your local network, but people often do not secure them as much as a phone or laptop.

Parr said: "You might use the app one day because you're bored and it's raining outside, but the impact is the TV is consistently operating as a 'proxy' for as long as you have it. That one click could result in three or four years ... of someone putting a mask on and pretending to be you."

Parr added that once a device had been compromised, cybercriminals were "able to hop from that to other devices in your household".

Smart TV companies such as Amazon and Roku have banned apps that harvest internet addresses. Since the research, LG and Samsung have also committed to phasing out the apps, although this will not affect anyone who has already downloaded one.

Of the 6,038 apps scanned across the LG and Samsung platforms, 2,058 were found to be selling the user's internet address by acting as residential proxies, Spur found.

In an interview with the journalist Brian Krebs, John Taylor, a senior vice-president at LG, said: "A residential proxy network is not an intended use for LG smart TVs, and LG Electronics is working with developers to remove the residential proxy option from their apps on the webOS platform."

Hippocratic oath for AI designers 'to do no harm'

Kaya Burgess
Science and Religious Affairs Correspondent

Academics at the University of Oxford have drawn up a new version of the Hippocratic oath, associated with a pledge by doctors to "do no harm", for the world of artificial intelligence.

The Oxford Oath for AI Professionals was designed to provide ethical guidance for AI developers and to reassure the public that they acknowledge the "social consequences and impact" of building tools that can operate independently of human intervention.

A system designed by OpenAI broke free from its digital confines during a test last month and escaped on to the internet, where it found a way to hack into the firm that designed the test.

The phrase "do no harm" does not appear in the Hippocratic oath, but comes from a work by Hippocrates, who said that physicians should seek "to do good or to do no harm". Most doctors today take a form of pledge similar to the Declaration of Geneva, vowing to "maintain the utmost respect for human life".

Oxford academics had been approached by AI engineers who wanted some "ethical guidance". The working version of the oath can be taken as a secular or religious pledge. The taker promises to "bring optimism and caution to my work", to "make my work governable", and to "orient my work towards respect for human identity, enhancement of human creativity, and support for dignified human work", vowing to "build towards conditions that support justice, peace, and care of the natural world".

The Venerable Dr Lyndon Drake, a priest who works within the Faculty of Theology and Religion at Oxford and is a research fellow focusing on AI, said he would be "super excited" if chief executives at companies such as Anthropic signed up but he was working with less senior figures to introduce the oath from the "bottom up".

Tribunals rise as staff build cases with AI

George Odling

The number of people filing claims against their employers has risen by 39 per cent in a year due to an increase in AI-generated submissions.

The backlog of unresolved individual claims rose by 55 per cent to 64,000 cases in the year to March, as the rate of cases being resolved or rejected fell.

There has been a rise in applications for interim relief, a measure under which a judge can order a company to reinstate a fired employee, or at least pay their wages.

According to a memo from judges Barry Clarke and Susan Walker, the presidents of the employment tribunals system in England and Wales and Scotland, respectively, there had been roughly 20 such applications a year — but now "most offices are receiving a similar number each month".

The judges said AI was partly why there were more complex claims. In the minutes from a meeting in March, the presidents noted: "The shared view of judges was that AI was likely behind an increase in the complexity of claims, applications for reconsideration and applications for interim relief, as well as inflated schedules of loss."

Jessica Bass, a partner at Oury Clark, said that AI is making it quicker and cheaper to do submissions. "Claims that might previously have been set out in a single paragraph are now often expanded into several pages, with ... extensive legal references," she added.

Tribunals are more vulnerable to AI than other sections of the legal system because there is no fee to bring a case.

Bass said that the UK could follow Australia in restricting its use.

Pupils invited to rework history in Bayeux Tapestry contest

David Sanderson

Britain's schoolchildren have been given the chance to rewrite the history chronicled by the Bayeux Tapestry.

An embroidery competition for pupils aged 7 to 11 will challenge children to create their own version of the tapestry's lost final panel, nearly 1,000 years after the original was made.

While the panel is thought to have shown William the Conqueror's coronation after the 1066 Battle of Hastings, the competition organisers said they hoped pupils would "turn away from conquest and bloodshed to imagine a better tomorrow".

The winning classes in the Beyond the Battle competition, organised by the international arts foundation Art Explora and the charity English Heritage, will receive tickets and transport to see the tapestry at the forthcoming exhibition at the British Museum.

They will also be given the opportunity to visit the site of the Battle of Hastings, which is managed by English Heritage.

All participating schools will receive resources created by the embroidery artist Jessica Grady and will be encouraged to use whatever materials are already "in the art cupboard, recycling bin or craft box at home".

Jemima Montagu, the director of Art Explora UK, which aims to widen access to arts and culture, said the project would let children discover the craft of "storytelling in thread". She said they would explore the history of the period, learn the embroiderers' techniques and then "tell a story of their own".

The 70m linen depicts the death of King Harold during the battle in 1066

The final panel of the 70m-long linen, which is thought to have made near Canterbury before being transported to France, has been missing for centuries. It is widely assumed to have featured William being crowned at Westminster Abbey.

The schoolchildren's task, according to the competition organisers, is to work as a class to "create, design and stitch an original textile work that pictures a better tomorrow, and celebrates the actions, people and values that could make that vision real".

Film helped to mend rift with daughter, says Ewan McGregor

David Sanderson Arts Correspondent

Ewan McGregor has revealed that his post-divorce rift with his daughter was healed only when they worked together on a father-daughter film in which she furiously "let him have it".

The actor best known for playing Obi-Wan Kenobi in the Star Wars films said his eldest daughter Clara McGregor, 30, had been "very hurt and angry" when he separated from his first wife, Eve Mavrakis in 2017.

McGregor, 55, said it had been a "very painful time" with Clara — one of his four daughters with Mavrakis — "expressing her anger very well".

The actor briefly became emotional at the Edinburgh International Film Festival, as he recalled Clara subsequently approaching him to say she "was writing a story about us" and wanted him to act in it as her father.

He admitted to initially being "really scared" that the film, which was released in the UK in 2024 as *Bleeding Love*, would be biographical.

"It was about the reparation of a relationship between a father and daughter that hadn't fully happened between us," McGregor said. "It was a very important part of that for me and her by being on set together and telling a story about an estranged daughter. Not biographical but massive elements that are."

He said there was an "incredible, brilliant moment when she [Clara] fully lets her dad have it; really tells him what she thinks of him and she was able to do so in reality."

ALAMY

Ewan McGregor with Clara on the set of Bleeding Love. The star married Mary Elizabeth Winsted in 2022

After his separation from Mavrakis, who is now 60, McGregor married the American actress and singer Mary Elizabeth Winstead, 41. They have a five-year-old son.

McGregor, who married Mavrakis in 1995, said their divorce had been "very difficult".

"It was a very painful time. My children were very hurt, Clara was very hurt and Clara was — I'm very grateful for it now — but she was very open with me, very vocal with me, and expressed her anger very well," he said.

McGregor married Mavrakis, a production designer, just as his gilded career was taking off. His breakout performance as Renton in the 1996 film *Trainspotting* based on Irvine Welsh's book and directed by Danny Boyle was followed by lead roles in *Velvet Goldmine*, *Moulin Rouge* and, most famously, in the Star Wars prequel trilogy.

While McGregor's role as Obi-Wan Kenobi — a character made famous by Sir Alec Guinness in the original Star Wars trilogy — was well-received, the films themselves were not critically acclaimed. McGregor told the festival the poor reception had shaken him.

"They were not well-received and that was weird and hard; to put yourself into something like that and for it to be really dragged through the mud by the critics. I learnt a lot about not giving a shit. But I had to go back and do another one and another one. Then I stepped away and did lots of other stuff."

McGregor said that because he did not think people liked the three films then he had avoided the Star Wars fan conventions held in the United States.

He added, however, that when he agreed in 2019 to star again as Obi-Wan Kenobi in a new Star Wars television series by Disney+, he had attended a convention and been amazed by the love for the trilogy from those who would have been children at the time of release.

"I was suddenly meeting people who we made those films for, who were children when we made them, and I started realising that they were loved and that the noise when they came out was not necessarily the only noise."

McGregor said it was much easier to play Obi-Wan Kenobi now as he was getting closer in age to Guinness when he played the character in the original trilogy adding that he "really hoped" there would be more Star Wars openings.

The actor also joked that he would love to be asked to play James Bond adding, however, that given his age he "might just have missed the boat".

Branagh plays army of characters in war epic

David Sanderson

It is one of the largest casts, and possibly the greatest, assembled in cinematic history, the director said. And Kenneth Branagh still plays eight parts.

The American film-maker Ken Burns has paid tribute to the galaxy of film stars he was able to assemble at relatively low cost for his six-part documentary, *The American Revolution*.

Burns said many actors including Gregory Peck and Tom Hanks had approached him asking for the opportunity to work with him on his epic documentary projects, which also includes series on the American Civil War, jazz and the Vietnam War.

He said that in The *American Revolution* Branagh and Hanks voiced several characters joining a cast that also included Meryl Streep, Josh Brolin, Samuel L Jackson, Edward Norton, Ethan Hawke, Matthew Rhys, Claire Danes and Damian Lewis.

"Branagh does a German voice, a Polish voice, a French voice, a British soldier, Irish soldier, British general, British minister and an American soldier," Burns told Edinburgh International Film Festival. "Americans probably wouldn't recognise him though."

Ken Burns gives his productions to Public Service Broadcasting

Burns said the 400 first-person voices in the documentary had been "read by 61 of the finest actors in the world .... I think it has the best cast in cinema."

Burns, who gives his films to the non-commercial Public Broadcasting Service rather than selling them, said each of his projects had been voiced by "people who enjoy making a contribution to these films".

He said there was occasionally a scheduling conflict which prevented participation. Brolin was able to record his lines as George Washington when he was in Atlanta in between flights.

The six-part, 12-hour documentary series which took Burns and his team more than a decade to put together has been hailed as the definitive word on America's war of independence.

Burns told the festival that he did not rush into projects, instead waiting for the "dust to settle".

He said he had banked 16 hours of interviews with Barack Obama, the former president of the United States, which he had not yet decided what to do with.

Troops help firefighters as water for farms is cut

Ben Cooke Environment Correspondent
Adam Vaughan Environment Editor

Farmers have had tighter limits on how much water they can take for irrigating crops imposed on them for the first time this summer, as military personnel were brought in to help tackle wildfires.

Regulators restricted irrigation in parts of East Anglia and soldiers were deployed to southern Wales to support firefighters.

As the drought across almost three quarters of England deepens — some places have gone 60 days without rain — officials ramped up restrictions on water abstraction.

The Environment Agency confirmed that it had introduced tighter limits on drawing water for parts of East Anglia in the past week. The regulator is considering expanding the restrictions to other areas.

Restrictions on spraying water for irrigation under Section 57 of the Water Resources Act 1991 have been imposed for 302 licences held by farmers in East Anglia. Such limits were last used during the summer of 2025.

Tom Bradshaw, the president of the National Farmers' Union, warned that farmers would not have enough water in future unless it became easier to build reservoirs on agricultural land.

He said the limits, while reasonable, were a reminder of the need for more water storage. "It's difficult for us to argue when there is no water in the rivers and streams that we can justify taking much more of that water at this time of year," he told The Times.

However, Bradshaw said that in the longer term the government should introduce reforms to enable farmers to build reservoirs without the need for planning permission. Without a change, he said farmers faced growing uncertainty over their water supply.

"At the moment even the best of businesses are questioning whether they will be able to build the infrastructure they need, whether they will be able to get the water that they need for the future," he said.

The government was expected to announce details of planning reforms for on-farm reservoirs today after announcing £15 million in funding on Friday to help build them.

While farmers are completing what looks set to be the worst harvest on record, firefighters are continuing to tackle a series of blazes that broke out in southern Wales over the weekend.

South Wales Fire and Rescue Service said yesterday that it was fighting 14 wildfires, including three "significant incidents" near the villages of Dowlais and Cwmavon, and Darran Park in the Rhondda valley.

Two hundred troops from the Queen's Own Gurkha Logistic Regiment have been brought in to help them. The soldiers are digging trenches, building firebreaks and carrying water, freeing up firefighters to put out the flames. Phil Garrigan, the chair of the National Fire Chiefs Council, warned on Saturday that fire services were under "incredible pressure", with 43 new wildfires since Friday, including 11 major incidents.

After a week in which 19 houses burnt down in Stourbridge in the West Midlands, the Met Office warned that much of the country remained at risk of further blazes.

Although the south of England and Wales had a few patches of rain on Saturday evening the fire risk remained "very high", the forecaster said, and "high" risk persisted across northern Wales and Lancashire and Yorkshire. It expects the risk to reduce significantly this week as the temperature cools.

Some residents who fled the Stourbridge wildfire were allowed to return to their homes yesterday morning. Families were told one by one by the West Midlands Fire Service whether their homes were safe to return to, or whether they had been burnet down or needed repairs.

The fires have led to calls from conservationists to "make Britain wet again" and restore marshland to create barriers to wildfires.

Craig Bennett, the chief executive of the Wildlife Trusts, called on the government to reintroduce beavers to every river catchment in England and Wales before the next election, saying that the creatures' dams were the "cheapest, fastest" defence against fire.

Beavers used to be present across Britain's watercourses, creating ponds that retain water even in drought, nourishing trees and preventing the tinderbox conditions that have prevailed during England's driest July on record. They have already been reintroduced to many rivers in Scotland.

Natural England first released them into the wild in England in March last year, in Purbeck Heaths in Dorset, and is considering releasing hundreds more across 21 sites in coming years.

Yet Bennett said their reintroduction had been "very cautious and very slow" and held back by "incredible amounts of red tape". He added: "Getting a licence to reintroduce beavers right now is like completing a PhD; it's like 60,000 to 70,000 words. Why don't we put in place a presumption in favour of reintroducing them? In other words, the default assumption becomes, 'It's OK to do it unless there are really strong arguments against it.'"

A 2020 study of wildfire-hit regions of America found the flames did a third as much damage to beavers' habitats as to surrounding areas of forest.

"It's as simple as this," Bennett said, "there is no wildfire happening at the moment in the areas of Devon and Cornwall where beavers are present."

Nature suffers most in this crisis, Jenni Russell, page 19
Measures to prevent future droughts should be put in place now, leading article, page 23

Wildfires blaze through the Ynysfeio Forest, above the village of Treherbert in the Rhondda Fawr valley. More than 200 soldiers have been deployed to south Wales to help fight the fires. Right, the remains of a house in Staffordshire destroyed by fire on Thursday

Thames Barrier 'will need replacing a decade early'

Max Kendix

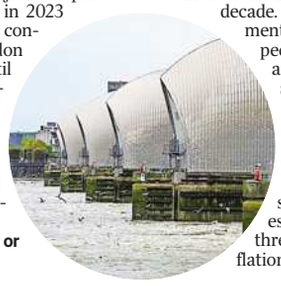
The barrier preventing London from flooding may need to be replaced a decade earlier than predicted and cost billions of pounds more, ministers have been warned.

The cost of replacing the Thames Barrier and other smaller barriers on the river is expected to be more than £20 billion, and the required completion date could be brought forward to as soon as 2060.

The works may take about 30 years to complete, forcing Labour to put billions of pounds aside for the project in this parliament to prevent millions of people in the south from being flooded.

Officials at the Environment Agency, which is responsible for flood management, have presented ministers with options to accelerate the project to replace the barrier.

The last official projections published by the agency in 2023 said the barrier would continue to protect London from flooding until 2070. However, the increasing frequency of heavy rains is forcing the barrier to close more often and accelerating its wear and tear faster than expected. "We're using it more than we planned to," a government source said. "It's getting harder and harder every year."



The barrier closes six or seven times a year

As well as protecting against tidal surges from the North Sea, the Thames Barrier is sometimes closed during periods of heavy inland rainfall.

When it became operational in the 1980s, the barrier would close two or three times a year. This has increased to six or seven times a year in the past decade. Now, the Environment Agency source expects the barrier to reach an average of 50 closures a year by 2035.

A total upgrade of the Thames's flood defences, including hundreds of new floodgates and several smaller barriers, was estimated at £16 billion three years ago. High inflation has pushed the figure

RYAN HISCOTT, CHRISTIAN DELICE/BRITISH ARMY /GETTY IMAGES: IOANNIS ALEXOPOULOS/LNP

We lie awake in fear that our house will burn down

Couple worry the fires that destroyed their home near London four years ago will return, writes **Lara Wildenberg**

Buddy was a puppy when his house caught fire. His owners, the Stock family, rescued him but four years later, he is still terrified of sirens.

The ridgeback-mastiff cross is not the only resident in Wennington who is on alert when a fire engine goes past.

The village, in the east London borough of Havering, was one of the worst affected by wildfires on July 19, 2022, when temperatures reached 40C and 41 homes were destroyed. Nearly half, 19, of these were in Wennington.

The fire brigade was not able to identify a specific cause of the fire but local people said it started when a garden compost heap spontaneously combusted. The flames spread across a field at the back of the houses.

Four years later, several residents have moved back into new houses on their original plots. Rather than enjoying the summer in their new homes, many live in fear of a repeat incident.

In the past week, the number of wildfires in England and Wales surpassed the total for the whole of last year. On Thursday a huge wildfire in Stourbridge in the West Midlands destroyed 19 homes and a fire in Staffordshire destroyed four more.

At the end of last month, London Fire Brigade had its busiest day of the year with more than 1,300 calls and in Havering there were 47 grass fires, more than any other borough.

Carole Hager, 82, and Ken Stone, 84, moved into their rebuilt home last June, three years after their 1954 semi burnt down. Hager had bought the house with her late husband in 1964 and had brought up her children there.

"We lost so much. I know they're just things and everybody was fine, nobody was hurt, but it was my lifetime here that just went," she said.

"What I'm afraid of now, is it happening again," Hager said. "We've got no fire breaks. This village is surrounded by fields. We were told it's so expensive but as my son points out, all it needs is a tractor and a couple of ploughs on the back just to dig around the edge of all these fields."

Pointing at the overgrown hedge opposite, Stone said: "They say that's a farmer's land so they can't do anything with it and the farmer says, 'Yeah, but that's on the main road, so that's your responsibility.'"

Carole Hager and Ken Stone's home was destroyed by fire four years ago

After the fire Havering council drew up a summer wildfire prevention action plan to cut the vegetation, which was more cost-effective than laying a wide concrete strip, around the houses. Neither local authorities nor the fire brigade have specific powers to require landowners to create and maintain firebreaks.

"It is the fear that is uppermost in your mind. I go to bed and [I think] if it's gonna happen, don't let it happen in the night," she said. "Somebody's got to make a law, in my opinion, that anybody who's got a field that backs on to people's property must maintain it regularly."

Fears of another wildfire meant Hager and Stone originally wanted to move from Wennington but said the insurance arrangement on their home complicated any sale. Others felt the same. The first building to catch fire in 2022 was a pair of semi-detached homes on the other side of the green to Hager's.

Tim Stock, 70, who works as the village gravedigger and church warden, and is Buddy's owner, said he tried to put out a fire in his neighbour's garden before it spread. His home of 43 years, which had been his grandfather's, was destroyed.

Stock finally moved back into the rebuilt house in February, with his wife, Maggie, and Buddy. They have been working to restore the garden where he said the dry grass was "like walking on a packet of crisps".

"It's unnerving because there's been loads of fires around the last few weeks in this area," he said. "There's one, no more than sort of a mile up the road. When the wind blows this way, it's acrid, the smoke, it's just horrible. I woke up the other morning and I thought, something's gone wrong with the house. It is on your mind all the time."

Stock uses his strimmer to cut vegetation between his property and the field behind, and had done the same for neighbours.

Mrs Stock said: "Everyone's got their grab bags, with passports, glasses, bank card. If we smell anything even at night, we don't sleep. You've got to be on watch all the time. We've got our binoculars ready."

Had they considered leaving Wennington? "I don't want to live here at all," Mrs Stock said. "I'd like to go, I'd like to move but then, where do you move to? There's fires everywhere."

Havering council said: "The council has numerous measures in place to help reduce the risk of wildfires, including promoting and pursuing the creation of firebreaks, as well as reminding residents and landowners about the dangers of fly-tipping and bonfires on grassland and reminding them to cut back any vegetation.

"There are also frequent meetings between council officers and the local fire brigade to review local risks and threats."

Margaret Mullane, the MP for Dagenham and Rainham, said: "Unfortunately, the land bordering Wennington is privately owned, meaning Havering council has no remit to carry out direct works.

"However, I have been calling publicly for the landowners to implement adaptations such as fire breaks and land maintenance to mitigate the risk of fire, I wrote directly to the principal landowners but they have been unresponsive. I have also been pressing the police to act to stop motor bike riders from accessing the fields immediately to the south of Wennington Road.

"Residents had reported that cans of petrol were being taken on to the land which raised concerns. These actions as well as causing noise nuisance were a fire risk.

"All public realm, including fire hydrants and the management of vegetation on verges falls under the remit of the local authority and I will be making representations in light of this week's fires, to ensure that areas which are owned by Havering council are properly maintained to reduce risk."

upwards of £20 billion, government sources believe.

The barrier was first proposed after a huge storm surge killed more than 300 people along the east coast and Thames estuary. It was initially engineered to last until 2030, accounting for some increase in sea levels and geological subsidence that is slowly sinking southeast England.

Caroline Douglass, an executive director at the Environment Agency, said the body had "full confidence in London's flood defences" and that "existing climate projections" indicated a new barrier would be needed from 2070.

She said: "We are actively assessing options for managing tidal flood risk, including consideration of options for upgrading or replacing the Thames Barrier ... We are working closely with the government, the mayor of London and Port of London Authority and are exploring options for funding the essential infrastructure upgrades needed to protect London and the Thames estuary for decades to come."

Extreme heat triggering 'false autumn' for trees

Adam Vaughan, Jason Manning

Britain is experiencing a "false autumn" as trees turn brown and shed their leaves months ahead of schedule.

The phenomenon, triggered by unprecedented periods of extreme heat and drought this summer, has left landscapes from Surrey to Northumberland looking like October in mid-August.

Tim Upson, the director of gardens and horticulture at the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS), said the yellowing and dropping of leaves was a "well-known response" to trees losing more water through their foliage than they can find in the soil.

He said the changes were occurring at least a month earlier than previous false autumns, such as the one that was triggered by last year's hot spell.

"It's what we might call a false or early autumn, but I would say more significant than that due to how early and the extent," Upson said.

At the National Trust's Wentworth Castle Gardens in South Yorkshire, a katsura tree has already begun emitting its signature toffee apple scent, usually rarely noticed until October.

Similar changes have been reported at the Ickworth Estate in Suffolk, Cragside in Northumberland and Penrhyn Castle in north Wales, where trees are desperately trying to reduce water loss.

Experts warned that the conditions are challenging for trees already stressed by the high temperatures experienced last year.

Mark Gush, head of environmental horticulture at RHS Garden Wisley in Surrey, said he had seen unusually high levels of leaf browning but that some species, such as the crape myrtle, were thriving in the heat. Wisley has now been 60 days without rain.

However, Graham Madge, a spokesman at the Met Office, said the forecasts suggests this unbroken run will end soon.

The impact is stark in London. Rosie Fyles, the head of gardens at Chiswick House and Gardens in west London, pointed to a London plane tree that had already lost 70 per cent of its leaves.

Fyles also warned that much of the fruit on trees was withering and dying before it could achieve ripeness. Several parks in the capital, including Southwark Park, are littered with bone-dry leaf-fall.

Gardeners are adapting as best they can to cope with the changing climate. At Chiswick, staff are using thick wood-chip mulches in order to trap moisture in the soil.

At Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire, chestnuts, beeches and oaks have begun to defoliate early. Andy Mills, the head gardener, explained that he planned to move planting forward from spring to later this year to allow roots to bed in over winter. "As a gardener, you've got to roll with what you've been presented with," Mills said.

The National Trust said it was taking a "responsible approach" to water use and suggested that species that could not withstand the new extremes might eventually be replaced by more resilient alternatives.

Rebecca Bevan, a senior national specialist in environmental horticulture at the trust, said that despite the stress, many plants were showing "incredible resilience".

News

Mahmood urged to close bail loophole

George Odling

Lord Howard of Lympne has urged Shabana Mahmood to amend his bail legislation to automatically confiscate the passports of serious crime suspects to prevent them fleeing Britain.

The former home secretary asked his successor to tighten a loophole he missed when pushing amendments to the Bail Act through parliament in 1993, amid a surge in arrest warrants.

Chris Philp, the shadow home secretary, agreed it was "common sense" to deprive serious offenders of the opportunity to flee Britain before justice can be served. Almost 60,000 arrest warrants were issued for defendants who failed to appear in court in England and Wales last year, up by almost 50 per cent since 2020.

Howard's intervention follows a campaign from the family of Jack Ryan, 29, who died after he was hit by a car driven by Rashid Ali, a Pakistani citizen in Britain on a student visa.

Ali, 32, appeared at preliminary court hearings charged with causing death by dangerous driving but fled to his homeland. He was convicted in his absence and sentenced to five years in prison.

In a letter backing the Justice for Jack Ryan campaign, Howard told Mahmood: "The loophole is obviously something I should have thought of when I took the 1994 [sic] legislation through parliament and much regret that I didn't. Can you please remedy my oversight?" The letter was shared with the Chelsea Citizen newspaper.

Ryan, who worked for the consultancy firm PwC, was jogging by Battersea Bridge in southwest London when he was hit by Ali's Range Rover travelling at twice the 20mph speed limit.

Ryan's family later discovered Ali's student visa had expired in 2015. Despite having no leave to remain, there were no immigration alerts against his name at the time of his arrest in January 2021, and he was granted bail.

Ali was sentenced in his absence in September 2024, and pledged to return to the UK to serve his sentence on many occasions but has failed to do so.

In May, Ali was tracked down in Saudi Arabia by Channel 4's *Dispatches* and told the journalist Matt Shea on a phone call: "I feel sorry for them [Ryan's family] and I definitely will face justice."

Ciara, Ryan's sister, said the experience had destroyed her faith in the criminal justice system and she was hoping Ali would be forced to return.

"It isn't even about punishment, it is just what is right," she said.

More than 30,000 failure to appear warrants remain outstanding, meaning thousands of criminals are on the run, many accused of serious offences. It is unknown how many have fled abroad.

The Home Office does not confirm whether extradition requests have been made. It said: "Foreign nationals who commit serious crimes should face the full force of the law."

CHANNEL 4/LOVE PRODUCTIONS

Knead to know Nigella Lawson, second from the right, will join Paul Hollywood, Alison Hammond and Noel Fielding for the latest series of The Great British Bake Off, on Channel 4 next month. Lawson has replaced Prue Leith as a judge

£400m 'super-prison' has 344 empty cells

Millie Turner

Britain's newest "super-prison", which cost £400 million to build, has hundreds of empty cells because it cannot recruit enough staff.

HMP Millsike, in East Yorkshire, which started taking inmates in March last year, has space for nearly 1,500 prisoners and was supposed to create 600 jobs. However, it is restricted to housing just over 1,100 inmates, leaving 344 cells empty, because taking in additional prisoners would be unsafe with the available workforce, according to The Daily Telegraph. "Millsike has been struggling to staff the prison," a senior prison source told the newspaper.

Last week Andy Burnham ordered the justice secretary Alex Norris to prevent the early release of two of PC Andrew Harper's killers, who were jailed for manslaughter in 2020. The prime minister has been warned that he cannot exempt specific offenders from the scheme without also keeping others convicted of the same crime in prison. There are 470 people in prison for manslaughter who are eligible for early release from October.

The Ministry of Justice said HMP Millsike would increase capacity "when operationally appropriate to do so".

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Pop princess confronts her ghosts in dazzling style

Pop Yasmin Choudhury

Ariana Grande
O2 London
★★★★★

It felt apt that Ariana Grande should emerge on the stage of the O2 arena from a burnt-out house, dressed in black lace and Louboutins. Before the pop princess appeared, we watched her on screen surveying incarnations of her former selves, as if contemplating which memories she might erase. The night continued this way: a deep dive into Grande's psyche and the past selves that made her.

The imagery feels potent now. After speculation over her health and appearance, the Florida native has announced that she will step back from public life when her *Eternal Sunshine* tour ends with this ten-night London residency. Aged 33, Grande has weathered much tragedy in public, from the Manchester Arena bombing at her concert in 2017 to the death of her former boyfriend Mac Miller in 2018. Here she rose from the ashes unscathed. Subtle it was not, but understatement has never been this vocal powerhouse's modus operandi.

Yes, And? was a suitably defiant opener, less question than challenge, delivered with a teasing, unbothered strut. Wearing a Catwoman-style mask for the slinky R&B of *The Boy Is Mine*, she slipped from breathy sensuality into elastic vocal runs. *Thank U, Next* was gloriously camp and roared back by fans before hot-pink lights ushered in the swaggering trap-pop of *7 Rings*, its spoken-sung lyrics dripping with attitude.

Grande's choreography was precise rather than explosive, but nothing felt lacking. The production barely drew breath — dazzling lights, costume changes and dancers propelled one song into another, while her vocal flourishes appeared effortless. *One Last Time*, imbued with new poignancy after Manchester, was a masterclass in yearning and catharsis. Grande belted it out with formidable force. Her laissez faire approach to enunciation continued, but who cares when your vocal acrobatics provoke audible "wow"s?

Then came the unadulterated sexiness of *Dangerous Woman*. Grande dropped to her knees to unleash a cascade of riffs and runs while her guitarist gave the track a sultry, bluesy edge.

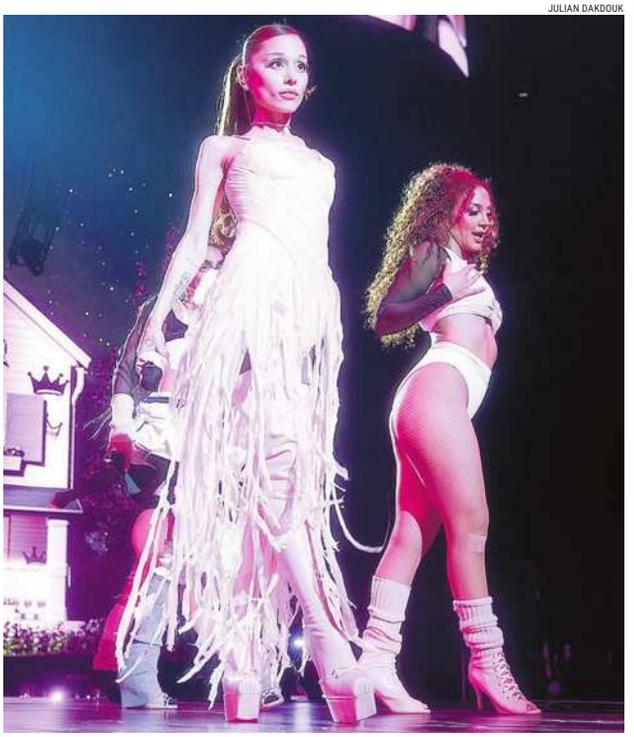
"This is by far the loudest crowd of the tour," Grande said while introducing *Hampstead*, the place where she rebuilt her life after divorce. Perched on a stool, she stripped everything back for the reflective track. Then, on screen, she smashed the computer threatening to delete her former selves. The answer was clear: those painful memories were hers to keep.

The title track from her new album, *Petal*, brought Grande into the present: fed up with criticism and bristling with controlled anger, she bounced around in a white gown to thumping drums.

Returning for the encore, Grande distilled heartbreak into something dreamy and sorrowful on *We Can't Be Friends (Wait For Your Love)*. Its outpouring of grief felt like the bittersweet release the night had been building towards. Having spent the show confronting rather than erasing her past, Grande was carried away by a beam of light during *Supernatural*. After two relentless hours of impossible highs, there was little left to prove. Grande remains one of pop's most formidable vocalists.

The O2, London, to Sep 1

JULIAN DAKDOUK



Ariana Grande's vocal acrobatics drew audible "wow"s from crowd at the O2

Ronaldo makes wedding a living room home fixture

Tash Mosheim

As one of the world's richest footballers, Cristiano Ronaldo could have married in a castle, on an island or amid the sort of celebrity spectacle often favoured by the most famous players.

Instead, he and Georgina Rodríguez chose their own living room.

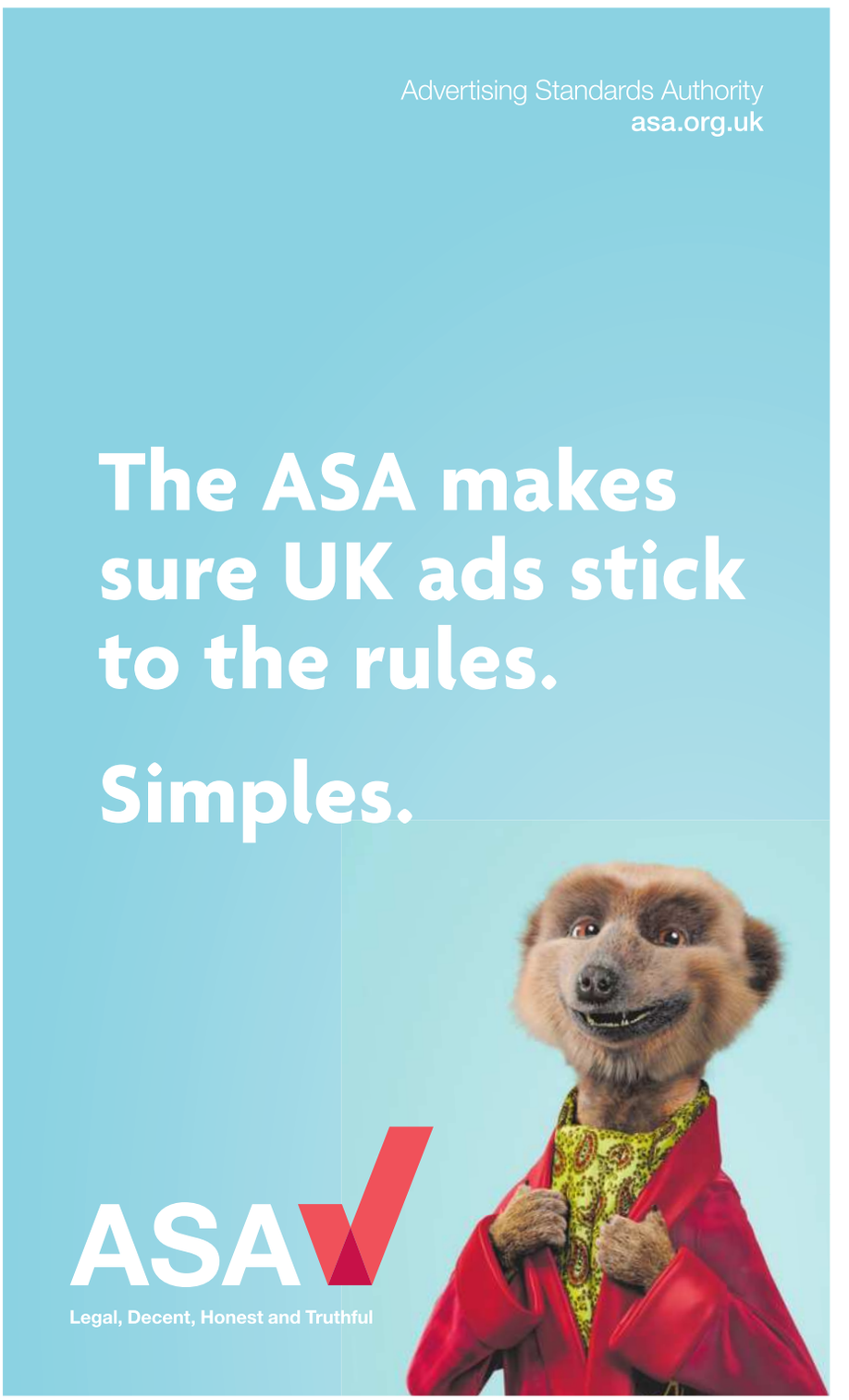
Rodríguez, 32, said that she wanted their children to look back in 30 years and remember that "something wonderful happened at this table: the wedding vows of our parents".

Ronaldo, 41, who has won five Ballon d'Or awards and played for Manchester United, Real Madrid and Juventus, married Rodríguez at their home in Cascais, Portugal, on August 11, exactly ten years after they met at a Gucci store in Madrid. The Portugal forward, who now plays in Saudi Arabia, told Vogue: "This is probably my last year of football, and I want to leave a spectacular legacy."

Rodríguez, a model and founder of the activewear brand Mimoa, had once imagined an extravagant wedding but decided that privacy had become more precious. She said: "When I was a little girl, I dreamt of the biggest castle, the biggest carriage, the longest dress, a crown full of diamonds.

"And now I'm saying: no. I want something intimate, with my partner and our children, at home."

There was no honeymoon as Ronaldo had to fly to Riyadh for the start of the new football season.



News

‘Every day my family fear the Taliban will find and kill us’

Afghans linked to Nato still live on a knife edge after promised help to reach the UK vanished, **Larisa Brown** writes

BEN SHREAD/MOD/PA

When the Taliban seized Kabul in August 2021, Laila, then a teenager, was in her first month studying law at university, full of hope for the future. She, like many young women, ran home, terrified of what might follow.

Not too far away, helping to defend the city from insurgents until the bitter end, was her father, Nadim, an agent of 20 years serving in the National Directorate of Security (NDS), the primary intelligence agency of the former US-backed Afghan government.

Seeing armed Taliban on the streets, he darted into an alley.

Since that day, August 15, Nadim’s family has been forced into hiding and subjected to years of heartache — and now poverty and despair.

He is among some 3,000 Afghans who have been told they can come to Britain because of the threats they face but, like the others, has been denied help to reach the UK.

Speaking over the phone from the Afghan capital, Laila, who is using a pseudonym for security reasons, said: “They [the Taliban] want to find my father and they want to kill him. I can’t cope when my father cries. Believe me, when I see our situation, I wish I was dead.”

As defence secretary, John Healey, who is now the chancellor, cut off support for families like Nadim’s, less than a year after pledging to “honour” existing invitations for them to come to the UK.

Nadim, 55, not his real name, was one of tens of thousands of Afghans who the UK government said were at risk of death after a British soldier inadvertently leaked their details in February 2022. The error led to an unprecedented superinjunction being imposed for nearly two years.

In the weeks before the superinjunction was lifted in July last year, the UK government closed the various routes Afghans had to apply for sanctuary in the UK.

Nadim, who had applied to come to Britain, was considered to be among those at greatest risk after the leak. He sleeps in the basement and rarely leaves the house. When he does, to find food, he covers his face with a scarf. His daughter, who speaks English, explained: “We are in a very bad situation in Afghanistan. When I think about my dream of being a lawyer, I cry.”

On August 31, 2021, a day after the last western planes left the airport with Afghans scrambling to flee the country, Nadim applied for the UK government’s Arap (Afghan relocations and Assistance Policy) scheme.

He informed the Ministry of Defence (MoD) that he was in hiding in a specific area, in Afghanistan’s Parwan province.

While he had served in dangerous roles throughout his career, in support of the US-led Nato mission, he had not served directly with UK forces. His support for western troops was, however, enough to make him a prime Taliban target.

Living in fear, he heard nothing until an email arrived in his inbox three years later, on 22 August 2024.

The MoD said he was eligible for sanctuary in the UK. What he was not told was why.

Back in Whitehall, officials had discovered his personal details had been compromised in a data leak. There was a risk that his information — including his whereabouts — could be in the hands of the Taliban.

Nadim had no idea, was not able to take any precautions, and was in the dark about the leak until another email in February this year.

He was told he had been offered relocation because he was on the list and he was allowed to the UK under the Afghan Response Route (ARR) scheme, set up to handle the fallout.

Laila explained: “I was in very bad situation. I was in shock, all of my family was in shock. We still are. Every day we think the Taliban will find and kill us.”

Nadim had been told that he, his wife and three of his five children would eventually be allowed to the UK. This meant Laila, who is now 23 and unmarried, and his oldest son would be left behind. The rest of the family waited for further instruction from the MoD, which was arranging third party assistance to Afghans to get them out.

A British evacuation flight at Kabul airport during the final withdrawal. Taliban fighters in the presidential palace, right, and on the streets of the capital after the western-backed regime collapsed

The third party would arrange passports and visas and would escort them across the border into Pakistan, where their accommodation and food was paid for.

However, the government terminated the system in April after seeing “increased evidence of successful self-moves”.

Eligible Afghans were told to make their own way out of the country within a 12-month window, despite many previously being advised against independent travel and lacking lawful or affordable routes.

With Pakistani visas costing as much as $2,000 a person, Nadim and his family are looking at a $10,000 bill, before taking into account how much it will cost to get them across the country safely. They can barely afford bread and now see no means to escape. For Nadim, the idea of leaving Laila, in Afghanistan, where she faces forced marriage, is unbearable.

If eligible Afghans ever make it to the likes of neighbouring Tajikistan to be flown to the UK, they have to pay thousands of dollars for their own hotel stays, transport and biometric tests. This bill can be extortionate, especially because Afghans can wait weeks to be flown to the UK.

Sara de Jong, an international relations professor at the University of York and campaigner for Afghans, said: “We call on the MoD to urgently reinstate support to get from Afghanistan to a visa application centre in Tajikistan.” She added that “Afghans with a relocation offer ... deserve protection rather than desperation”.

Jamal Barak, a former interpreter in the UK still fighting for his remaining family members to be allowed to Britain, said: “It is deeply concerning that thousands of Afghans who were promised sanctuary by the UK for their association with and support for British forces are now being left to find their own way to safety.

“These people placed their lives at risk ... A promise of sanctuary should mean a safe route to sanctuary.”

The case of his uncle, Sayed Shah, one of several former gardeners at a UK base in Lashkar Gah, is under review after he was initially rejected.

More than 40,000 Afghans have been brought to the UK since British combat troops withdrew from the country in 2014, the vast majority of them since the full withdrawal in 2021.

The MoD has said that if the Afghans to whom they offered sanctuary do not reach a third country within a year, they will not be able to relocate.

Person A, an activist and volunteer caseworker who helped Afghans who worked with UK forces, said: “I think the fact they [the government] are refusing to assist, and they’ve imposed a 12-month deadline for self moves, is a clear indicator that they are hoping that a large number won’t get out.”

An MoD spokesman said: “We have seen increased evidence of successful self-moves out of Afghanistan and after looking carefully at factors, including the risks to this cohort and the value for money for the taxpayer, we announced in April this year that in country assistance for movements would end.”

Paddy Vinnicombe, who uses traditional methods to fish for oysters in the Fal estuary in Cornwall, said the dredging required to redevelop Falmouth Docks, left, could end the fishery "as we know it"

MIKE NEWMAN FOR THE TIMES

Oysters 'face Armageddon' from £150m dock project

Adam Vaughan Environment Editor

Fishermen at one of Britain's last oyster fisheries have warned of "Armageddon" if their fears of pollution from a dock redevelopment come to pass.

Councillors in Cornwall meet this Thursday to evaluate the £150 million modernisation scheme at Falmouth Docks. It is one of the first flagship projects to be considered under a new government regime to streamline planning and prevent building delays.

The argument for the redevelopment is that it will allow Royal Navy vessels and larger cruise ships to berth, bringing an economic boost from more tourists and generating apprenticeships. It will also act as a staging post for assembling floating wind turbines in the Celtic Sea. One day it could even be used to export the lithium a mining company hopes to extract in Cornwall.

However, the scheme will require an area of about 232,500 square metres to be dredged, which opponents say could release contaminants in the sediment, harming habitats including the Fal estuary where oysters are caught.

Oysters have been fished in the estuary since Roman times and are caught by sail and by hand. Paddy Vinnicombe, a sixth generation oyster fisherman, said the way he and his father Chris fish was "old school".

"Other than a tiny engine that the boats use to get out to the actual estuary [there's no power]. As soon as it's time to fish, no power is allowed," he said. "There's no GPS, there's no fish finders, there's no hydraulics. It's essentially chuck your dredge over the side, give it a few seconds, start pulling it in, and then next thing you know, that's your day for the next six hours."

Vinnicombe, 30, fears this approach and his livelihood are under threat because of potential damage from the sediment. While scallops can migrate from polluted waters, oysters cannot.

"This is a much bigger impact and you're doing it on a fishery where everything's stationary and it can't escape. It's basically Armageddon, is what we're worried about. The realistic outcome is that this can end the oyster fishery as we know it," he said.

Cornwall Wildlife Trust has raised concerns about the sediment and how widely and reliably it has been tested.

The charity acknowledges that the docks are an important employer in need of redevelopment but argues that the plans present an unacceptable risk to local waters. Its analysis of the developer's environmental data found that three quarters of the core samples suggest contaminant concentrations that are unsafe for disposal at sea. Heavy metals, including mercury, zinc, lead and copper, were detected at levels up to 176 times higher than safe thresholds.

The docks scheme is a national pilot for the government's "lead environmental regulator" model. The idea is that developers deal with one body, rather than "a merry-go-round of overlapping regulators". In this case, the body is the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), which will co-ordinate with regulators such as Natural England and the Environment Agency.

John Spargo, who runs the gift shop Tall Ships Trading in Falmouth, is in theory well-placed to benefit from more cruise ships but is sceptical about how much more money they will bring to the town. "A lot of the passengers that arrive on cruise ships go all around Cornwall in coaches," Spargo said.

However, he has shifted his stance on the dock redevelopment from one of initial concern to a more relaxed position after reading the developer's plans. "I'm supporting it, but I'm supporting it on the basis that we have to trust the MMO to do their job. If they do their job, there is no problem," he said.

Jayne Kirkham, the Labour MP for Truro & Falmouth, is in favour of the project. She believes the focus on cruise ships, the largest of which currently have to anchor in the bay, is a distraction from the green energy benefits.

"The development of Falmouth docks could be a key pillar in unlocking Cornwall's massive renewables potential," Kirkham said, adding that the "development, if it happens, must be done in an environmentally safe way".

The MMO is considering a marine licence application from A&P Falmouth, whose parent company is now Balaena, an engineering and shipbuilding group. The developer has said the scheme would only involve "pocket dredging" close to the docks and would not dredge the main docks channel.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs said: "The Falmouth Docks scheme will fully comply with the environmental standards at the heart of this [lead environmental regulator] model, ensuring Cornwall's unique and precious natural environment is protected."

Balaena and the council did not respond to requests for comment.

Unleashing my inner warrior in the romantasy exercise class

Charlotte Alt

The sword in my hand is trembling and sweat is dripping down my face as I ready myself for the approaching enemy. "We're under fire. We're under attack," my commander yells. "We're about to go to war and it's not looking good. You're the only one who can save the city."

As I punch, high-kick and slice my sword through the air, it's easy to forget I'm not in the midst of battle. Nor am I, sadly, a warrior.

Instead, I'm in a small music venue in Newcastle participating in an exercise class that lets me pretend I'm the female hero in one of the romantasy (romance and fantasy) books that has taken over TikTok.

Last year four of the 20 bestselling books in the UK were romantasy titles, selling a a million copies combined. Media Control also estimated that more than 11 million book sales in the UK were attributable to #BookTok in 2025, generating £86 million.

A key aspect of those books, which include Sarah J Maas's *A Court of Thorns and Roses* and Rebecca Yarros's *Fourth Wing*, is that the female protagonist is no damsel in distress but a warrior figure with excellent fighting skills.

Wanting to create a place where women could channel their "inner warrior" inspired Annie Hardy and Rebekah Summerhill, founders of NCL Wellness Club, to create the exercise class, A Court of Battle & Burn.

"This year I was really, really deep into a fantasy book and I was like 'I just want to ride a dragon', and Rebekah was like 'I just really, really want to have a sword'," Hardy said. "As adults, we're told to go to the gym. No, I want to play with swords, I want to feel like I am the main character, I want to feel that I am strong, I am capable, I am a warrior."

That's also what made Cecilia Mereghetti, 34, a research coordinator, decide to give the monthly class a go. She said: "I'm a big fan of *Lord of the Rings*, so this is my chance to be Éowyn for the day. I think it's just going to be so much. Who doesn't want to do that? When I was a kid I would always play dress-up with my brothers and use sticks to fight, so this kind of brought me back."

The class begins with warm-ups before we grab plastic swords and get the first "battle update": enemy dragons have been spotted and we need to prepare. We learn a battle sequence that involves a defensive shuffle, a twirl with the sword, a kick and a slice. It's challenging but after a few tries, we execute it smoothly and let out a battle cry.

Charlotte Alt at the Court of Battle and Burn

Phoebe Hallett, 29, a health security analyst, has brought her own sword.

She said: "I just wanted something that was fun, that had movement but is just purely fun. We don't get to play as adults, especially as women, we're encouraged to be very serious and not play and be silly."

I do feel a little embarrassed as I whack my plastic sword around but as the class goes on I'm having too much fun to care. It's also exhausting and quickly my legs and back are sore.

Lauren Peters, 28, a photographer who has been to every class since they started this year, said: "The first one was just silly, goofy, playing with swords. Then the second class, it was a proper workout."

Hardy and Summerhill founded NCL Wellness Club almost two years ago to create a community where women could make friends, exercise and have fun. They offer a range of classes, such as "feminine rage pilates" or line dancing, but also host social events like pub quizzes or a book club.

"We wanted to build a safe, explorative and fun place for women and nonbinary people in the northeast," Hardy said. "Working out shouldn't be this thing that you dread."

As the class comes to an end we are gaining the upper hand over the enemy dragons. Another punch, kick and stab and the last foe is defeated. In unison we let out a victorious scream.

News

Faulty cameras let speeding drivers off

Laurence Sleator
Transport Correspondent

Thousands of speeding motorists are avoiding penalties because a fault with some enforcement cameras on major motorways and A roads has not been fixed for almost a year.

The fault, first identified in October, means that police have not been issuing penalty tickets to motorists caught by certain speed cameras on some of the country's busiest roads.

In the hope of deterring offending motorists, the affected cameras still flash when they detect a speeding driver but breaches are not enforced because police do not have confidence in the current technology.

Last year, a "technical anomaly" was identified with 154 speed cameras used on all smart motorways, including parts of the M25, M1, M5 and M6, and some A roads.

It meant that there was a small delay in the link between the enforcement cameras and the variable speed limit signs, meaning that some drivers were incorrectly clocked as speeding after the limit displayed on the gantry had changed.

National Highways, the government body in charge of England's major roads, said that it had identified 2,650 instances of "erroneous camera activations" since 2021 but police forces across the country were so concerned that they cancelled more than 36,000 ongoing and historic speeding cases related to the cameras.

At the time the government launched a review and said that a fix for the faulty cameras had been agreed. However, more than ten months after the national issue was identified, the malfunctioning cameras are still being put through testing by the Home Office and have not yet been approved for use.

While they wait for approval, police forces are not issuing any enforcement notices for speeding motorists caught by the faulty cameras.

In January, shortly after the camera flaws were exposed, Nick Harris resigned as chief executive of National Highways after five years in charge with sources stating that he had lost the board's confidence.

The independent review ordered by Heidi Alexander, the transport secretary, into the agency's handling of the issue is due this summer but is yet to be published.

Simon Williams, from the RAC, said: "It's very concerning that this has not been fixed and that so many speeding drivers are not facing the consequences. We urge the government to address this as a matter of priority."

A National Highways spokesperson said: "Speeding offences continue to be detected and prosecuted. A range of enforcement measures are in place to help keep road users safe. A fix for the impacted cameras is going through rigorous testing."

I do, with just a few on the guest list

Deciding who to invite to a wedding was once the thorn in many couples' sides, often leading to squabbles about plus ones and how many distant relatives could be squeezed into the venue (Marieta Marinova writes).

Now they are drawing a firm line on guest lists — not to save cash, but to personalise their special day their own way.

Georgie Mitchell, a wedding planner, said couples used to go to her with "around 100-120 guests, whereas now it's halved to about 60-80".

She said: "Although numbers are down, the spend per guest is actually going up. People are obviously picking the people that they really care about and they're happy to spend more on them."

The average cost per guest this year is up four per cent to £272, according to the online platform Hitched, which connects couples to vendors and venues.

That rises to £347 for a guest list of between 26 and 50 people, but drops to £225 for those who still throw bigger parties with more than 100 people, though search figures from Google suggest more are leaning towards intimate gatherings.

Despite shorter guest lists, Mitchell said "expectations are far higher". She added: "People really want their guests to love it and they know it's going to be online, so they want it to look good for social media."

Hamish Shephard, co-founder of Hedsor House, a Georgian country house

Making our way through centuries-old streets

Most weeks pass by in a blur, but this one felt different. We woke up to a new view every morning, spent most days wandering colourful harbour towns and ticking off places we'd talked about visiting for years. Back onboard, no two evenings felt the same – one night it was a West End-style musical, the next, live music on the pool deck. Looking back through the photos now, it's hard to believe how much we saw.

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ALINA PULLEN

Couples photographed by Alina Pullen who specialises in small gatherings. Amy Ward, 29, below, had only eight guests at her May wedding

wedding venue in Buckinghamshire, said: "Recently we also had a bride who likes Harry Potter, so the rings were delivered by an owl down the aisle." He added. "People are choosing what's unique to them whereas 15 years ago it would be following a sort of traditional playbook with a lot more formality."

But Mitchell suggested that couples are still conscious about how they spend their money.

Amy Ward, 29, tied the knot with her partner in May. They had eight guests, including their son, two, who walked her down the aisle, spending just under £5,000 on the whole celebration, including the venue in Sheffield, where they met while at university.

"For us a wedding isn't about having a big party or spending lots of money," Ward, whose dress cost £5 from a vintage second-hand shop, said.

"The venue was the most expensive and it was important to us because it's where we met. It had a romantic and personal meaning to both of us."

Millennials tuck into bone broth to ward off wrinkles

Eleanor Hayward Health Editor

Demand for bone broth from supermarkets has doubled as millennials seek collagen-rich foods to help prevent wrinkles, research shows.

Collagen is a protein that serves as the main building block for skin, bones, tendons and muscles and is naturally abundant in the body. However, production of it declines with age.

This has led to collagen being hailed as an anti-ageing tool and becoming the UK's most popular wellness supplement, although many scientists are sceptical about whether it actually improves skin appearance.

Data also shows that more adults are buying collagen-rich foods as they see it as a "natural alternative" to treatments such as Botox.

Ocado Retail, the UK's biggest online-only supermarket, said searches for beef bone broth had doubled in the past year. Collagen is found in the highest concentrations in bones and cartilage, with bone broth a rich source.

Other foods high in collagen include sardines, chicken skin, fish and tough cuts of beef, while fruit and vegetables such as leafy greens that are high in vitamin C are necessary to support production. Given most collagen supplements cost more than £25 a month, changing your diet may be cheaper.

Collagen is most popular among millennials, according to a survey of 2,082 adults by Clariti in June. Half of those aged between 30 and 45 said they had bought more collagen-rich supplements or food in the past year.

The survey also found that half of adults saw collagen as a natural alternative to cosmetic treatments, because it was believed to enhance skin plumpness and reduce wrinkle depth. Collagen supplements are sold as powders, gummies, pills or in liquid sachets.

Polling by YouGov last year found that collagen was the most popular wellness supplement in the UK, and is taken by 15 per cent of women and five per cent of men.

However, despite collagen's increasing popularity, the science is not clear-cut on whether it actually helps to reduce wrinkles.

In January a review by a team at Anglia Ruskin University found that collagen supplements were not an "anti-wrinkle quick fix" but did help with skin elasticity and joint stiffness. The researchers said that while supplements were not "superficial cosmetic aids" to help reduce wrinkles, they can help to keep skin elastic and hydrated.

Homeowners shun minimalist interiors

Homeowners are ditching grey interiors in a shift from minimalism towards warmer tones, a paint brand has said.

Lick, which is stocked at B&Q, reported a rise in sales over the first half of the year, shrugging off pain elsewhere in the home improvement sector. Shoppers were seeking to make their homes more cosy as high mortgage rates put many off moving, Lucas London, the chief executive, said.

Demand for green and pink shades were notably strong. Greens were the most popular, comprising 17.4 per cent of sales in the past 12 months, while pink shades comprised 13.9 per cent.

Demand for grey shades, which had been buoyed by influencers, fell by half to 2.3 per cent. Nevertheless, white paint remained popular and sales of the neutral tones beige and taupe grew.

London said paint demand remained robust partly due to Lick's "relatively affordable" price point. First-half sales were up 51 per cent year-on-year, showing that the brand was "very strong and outperforming the market", he said.

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TIMES Events

Ben Macintyre on the untold story of The Cold War's most extraordinary spy

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Employing ex-prisoners makes sense all round
Sam Merullo
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Comment

Nature suffers most in this deadly drought

The government's focus is on people, not on our reckless damage to the natural world that keeps all of us alive

Jenni Russell
@JENNIRSL

I'm relieved we have a new, decisive prime minister. One who can grasp complex issues, understand trade-offs and announce a clear path ahead. It's what we need in this climate crisis.

It's the second summer of intense heat and southern drought, with shrivelled crops and shrunken harvests, dwindling reservoirs, dried-out streams, dying trees, parched ground baked yellow for hundreds of miles and dozens of wildfires burning thousands of acres, some still out of control. In the West Midlands, 19 houses have burnt down in an "apocalyptic" conflagration, the military are digging firebreaks in Wales to help exhausted firefighters, an extensive fire closed a major road to the West Country and two train derailments in 24 hours are thought to have been caused by intense heat affecting the tracks.

The situation is so serious that last week Andy Burnham called a Cobra meeting, the highest level of crisis management, to co-ordinate the government's emergency response. How should Britain, happily accustomed to its protected position as a green and pleasant land, adjust to a far more volatile and perilous world: drenched and stormy winters followed by scorching summers?

Last Wednesday I kept checking to see what Burnham had concluded. Here in Gloucestershire the landscape is scarred. The vast arable fields are pale dry stubble, harvested almost a month early with yields from spring barley down by 25 per cent and wheat by 13 per cent, ruinous for farmers already operating on the most precarious margins. The ground is cracked and hard, ominous because water will pour off that surface in a torrent in any sudden rain. Small ponds have evaporated. The tiny local river, which floods fields in winter, is now a trickle. It is the only watercourse for at least a mile, and is what nearby birds and wildlife rely on to survive, as puddles have vanished and the desiccated grasses have no moisture left.

The little roads are scattered with fallen branches as trees cannot keep their extremities alive. In my garden the trees and bushes that provide birds with critical winter food — rowan and elderberry, crab apples and guelder rose — are drying up; their fruit is dehydrating and their leaves turning prematurely brown. Wildlife dies invisibly in this intense heat.

> Much of England's wildlife is falling victim to a silent apocalypse

Birds, badgers and foxes can't find the worms and insects they depend on because the ground is baked hard and the flowering plants that insects and pollinators feed on are withering.

It is a silent nature apocalypse, replicated across England. An unthinkable number of creatures have been incinerated in the fires: adders, slow-worms, hares, young birds. Fish are being left flapping and asphyxiating as rivers dry up; volunteers are helping to rescue a few and transferring them to watercourses still flowing. There are pitiful pictures of desperate bewildered ducks standing at the muddy bottom of vanished ponds, starving in their lost habitat.

Yet official advice talks only of the impact on people. It is perverse that a country that builds bat tunnels and protects newts is so indifferent to the life killed by drought and fire.

The food and water bowls I leave out are besieged by small creatures: voles, field mice, robins, blackbirds, finches, tits and woodpeckers, magpies and the occasional brown rat. Minute pale frogs submerge themselves to rehydrate. At night I watch hedgehogs, a threatened and naturally solitary species, clustered warily three at a time in a small patch, eating kitten kibble scattered on the grass and clambering into pie dishes to drink. Most nights a fox cub comes to graze kibble hungrily between the hogs, rearing away when its nose touches a hedgehog's spines. The fox is a measure of the shortage of food; he has become hauntingly thin.

And how did our resolute prime minister decide to deal with this national catastrophe of tinderbox land, declining food supply, dying wildlife and an ecosystem collapsing under unprecedented conditions? I was expecting him to cover immediate, individual and systemic responses. I hoped he might start by saying: "In this disastrous drought, nature is paying the highest price and humans must do more. Rivers are being depleted to meet careless consumer demand. So cut your personal water use substantially. Instead, in this emergency, leave out bowls for insects and wildlife, feed where you can, and water the trees, bushes and pollinating plants nature needs most."

We got none of this. Instead Burnham said, diffidently, that he was considering, possibly, in the long term, a ban on disposable barbecues, since they might have been the cause of some of the fires. It was an astoundingly feeble response. Two days later it was upgraded to an actual ban. That's welcome but avoids the substantial issues: how our country has become so vulnerable and how we remedy it, fast.

Southern Britain's fields are scorched and rivers and streams are drying up

The blindness of British politicians on this issue is petrifying. They declare a climate and nature crisis, but act only on the climate part. This year the UK's intelligence chiefs warned that Britain's food resilience and nature decline were a matter of national security.

For 70 years we have been systematically destroying the resilience of our landscape and soil by demanding that farmers cultivate intensively. Artificial fertiliser — now exclusively imported — insecticides, herbicides and fungicides have boosted yields in the moment but left soils fragile, short of the organic matter that lets it retain water in a drought or absorb it in a flood, and killing off the complex microbial and fungal networks that sustain life on Earth.

As an efficiency we have ripped out the majority of the hedges, ditches, trees, ponds, field verges and copses of my childhood, all of which protected the land from heat, wind and floods. We have dried out the wetlands, straightened the rivers and destroyed the varied habitats for wildlife, insects and plants, to create increasingly bare, near-sterile prairies.

The only minister who saw the danger of this and tried to reverse it with schemes for environmental protection and regenerative farming was Michael Gove, but Labour have shredded his policies and collapsed those budgets, ensuring continuing destruction. Burnham's weekend announcement of £65 million to help farmers was just a shifting of existing budgets, and pitifully small. Less than the bill for a week of hosting asylum seekers here.

Nobody in power has cared much about nature, farming and resilience in Britain for many years because it's assumed we can always fall back on cheap food from abroad. No longer. Potatoes are boiling in the ground in Asia, there's drought across Europe, the bombing of Odesa limits exports from the world's bread basket, Ukraine. Trump's Iranian war is blocking much of the world's fertiliser supplies. Food prices will rise, making nonsense of Burnham's cost of living pledge.

It is imperative that he and his government act decisively, coming up with transformative, sustainable, regenerative policies to protect our food, future and land. And Times readers? Could we do what we can and leave wildlife some water every night?

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Comment

Employing ex-prisoners makes sense all round

Those who manage to get a job are less likely to reoffend — it isn't charity, it's good business

Sam Merullo

It began with a conspicuous silence on a page. Jimmy's CV featured a gaping chronological gap, but his eyes pleaded with me to give him a chance and, frankly, I wanted to. When I asked about it, he didn't flinch. "I'll work harder than anyone," he said, "because I've had fewer chances than anyone else."

I had founded a fast-growing delivery and courier business. We were hiring at breakneck speed, looking for reliability, resilience and a sense of humour. We certainly did not set out to recruit ex-prisoners. We had no HR department, no legal team and no policy for any of this: we were the head office, the regional office, indeed the only office. Hiring Jimmy was a gut decision, and one of the best I made.

Six months later I was standing in a dimly lit underground car park in Soho surrounded by a newly recruited army of eager, unreliable and combustible couriers. Many of them were convicted robbers, some fresh out of the cells. Word had spread. All of them wanted what Jimmy had wanted: someone to ignore the gap on their CV.

The row over Kemi Badenoch's decision to hire Joshua Bonehill-Paine, jailed in 2015 for antisemitic harassment, as a party adviser put rehabilitation back on the front pages. His is an extreme case, and I make no judgment on that appointment here, but the row exposes the question we keep dodging. If we believe people can change — that nobody is defined solely by their worst mistake — then what, exactly, are the 1,100 prisoners who complete their sentences in England and Wales each week supposed to do next? They return to the same streets, the same temptations and, too often, the same absence of opportunity.

I had not set out to employ offenders. Running a business is hard enough and managing people of any background is always a headache. But Jimmy had something, and John Timpson had proved it could be done, hadn't he? With one in four working-age people in the UK holding a criminal record of some kind, our subterranean HQ was, for many, the only door that hadn't been slammed in their face.

> Reoffending costs the country an estimated £18 billion a year

Not everyone deserved the opportunity. One tall, skinny man in his twenties asked, with a straight face, why he should work when he could "smoke weed at home on the dole". I showed him the door. Business can provide opportunity but it cannot manufacture ambition.

Nor is this a sentimental redemption story. We fired plenty of people, mainly because they simply didn't turn up. Theft was common and absences through the roof. One employee, caught stealing company helmets, looked baffled that anyone minded. "We hunt to feed ourselves," he shrugged. "We trust no one." You could always tell those who had been inside: they had an instinctive, hardened distrust of authority, a defensive crouch developed in the cells. A distrust of authority helped put them in prison, jail then destroyed whatever faith remained.

We had no textbook, so we tried something simple: high standards in return for high support. We helped workers find accommodation, recommended them for future jobs and visited staff in hospital. From them we expected reliability, honesty and commitment. Gradually, something changed. Staff turnover fell. Those who stayed discovered that work offered what prison never could: routine, purpose and community.

And here is the counterintuitive part. These were not selfless acts. Employees who had been given a genuine second chance were often more loyal than those who had never needed one. We could not help everyone, and nor should we have tried. But for those prepared to meet us halfway, the calculated risk made commercial sense. The market, I came to believe, was mispricing these workers.

The numbers bear it out. Employment remains the most effective way of cutting reoffending — according to Ministry of Justice data, prison leavers who are unemployed six weeks after release reoffend at a rate of 35 per cent; for those in work, it falls closer to 16 per cent. Reoffending costs the country an estimated £18 billion a year. At a time when logistics firms face persistent vacancies and hospitality struggles to recruit, overlooking thousands of people willing to work is neither economically sensible nor socially responsible.

But employers need confidence that government will share the risk. Most simply don't understand the rules around criminal records. They worry about asking the wrong question at interview, misreading a spent conviction or a DBS check, or being blamed if a recruit goes on to offend. Clearer disclosure rules, sensible liability protections and practical support would do more than any number of ministerial speeches. Organisations such as the Jobs Foundation are already helping companies share best practice, demonstrating that this is not a case of naive idealism but of sound economics.

Jimmy left us for a better job in design, his confidence regained. He was not exceptional because he had been to prison, he was exceptional because a business had looked beyond it. Whether that CV gap becomes the beginning of another sentence or the beginning of a working life may depend less on parliament than on whether an employer is prepared to give someone like Jimmy a chance.

That isn't charity. It's good business. And, increasingly, it's in Britain's national interest.

Sam Merullo is an entrepreneur and investor and is a member of the business council of the Jobs Foundation

THUNDERER

Historic buildings can help to solve this housing crisis

Neil Mendoza

Britain's housing crisis will certainly not be solved by any single measure. But one route that deserves attention is using the nation's great store of heritage assets.

Historic England's research shows that repurposing vacant historic buildings could create between 560,000 and 670,000 new homes, including 120,000 one-bedroom flats above high-street shops alone. This would not resolve the housing crisis, but it could make a meaningful contribution — one that comes with great advantages.

Unlike newbuild developments, these homes already have infrastructure around them: transport links, shops, schools. They require no new land and minimal embodied carbon in construction. Crucially, they help solve a second crisis along with the first: the hollowing out of town centres.

This matters because vacancy is corrosive. Empty units invite antisocial behaviour and drain the confidence a place has in itself. Filling them with homes, not just shops,

> We are restoring those buildings that gave a town its character

restores the life high streets have lost: people who are there in the evenings, who spend locally, who have a stake in keeping the place cared for.

Historic England will work, as ever, with developers and local authorities to make this happen. We've seen this model succeed across the country, in cities like Liverpool, Newcastle and York. It works in smaller towns too. In Burnley, a £300,000 repair grant is helping transform old council offices into 18 residential apartments, part of a wider heritage-led regeneration that has already restored Victorian buildings and turned them into artist studios and workshop space. And in Bacup, Lancashire, a grade II listed former bank has been brought back into use for the community to provide accommodation and other communal spaces.

Instead of trying to turn a space into somewhere else, developers worked with what was already there, restoring buildings that had given each town its character rather than replacing it. That is the lesson for anywhere hoping to do the same.

This is why the approach fits naturally within the government's Pride in Place Strategy, which rightly recognises that reviving high streets and rebuilding a sense of community are so entwined. As we confront both the housing shortage and the loss of civic pride, underused historic buildings are practical, ready-made answers.

Lord Mendoza is chairman of Historic England

Agnès Poirier Notebook

Go west if you want to escape this unholy heat

After a few years of research and 45 weeks of writing, I finally delivered the manuscript of my book (about Paris's Right Bank, 1885-1908) to my publisher — and this week took my first holiday in a very long time. What joy! This year my favourite destination, Brittany's Côte d'Émeraude — the Emerald Coast — feels more idyllic than ever.

The shoreline from Cancale to Cap Fréhel, by way of St Malo and Dinard, unfolds in a northern Breton succession of dramatic yellowish granite headlands, broad tidal beaches and belle époque villas. It owes its name to the distinctive colours of the sea. I took again to the sumptuous Sentier des Douaniers, the old customs officers' path, which threads the coast: turquoise water, sandy coves and windswept promontories, with only the cries of seagulls and the crash of waves for company.

Within days I had resumed an old routine: an early morning swim, then brioche, croissants and coffee with newspapers at a café on Place de la République — where else? Each day brings a fresh walking expedition, preferably punctuated by an ice cream or a galette-saucisse.

Beyond its beauty, this corner of France feels particularly blessed. It has largely escaped the devastating fires caused by the record drought; it has experienced only one of the five heatwaves France has had since June and the weather has been relentlessly sunny, tempered by a divine sea breeze, with temperatures hovering around 24C and no rain whatsoever. In other words, the Emerald Coast is the new French Riviera. Ouest-France has reported a 20 per cent increase in tourism. Yet one never feels hemmed in by mass tourism as one does in the south of France. There is always a hidden beach on which to lie alone with a book. Bliss.

Fab films

Even in my Breton paradise there are cinemas, arthouse and otherwise, where I can catch up with the French films du jour. Besides the Charles de Gaulle diptych *La Bataille de Gaulle*, which has sold nearly five million tickets in France and reaches British screens on August 28 — I highly recommend it — there is a small French comedy that has drawn close to a million filmgoers in just two weeks and will, one hopes, soon be snapped up for UK distribution.

Shot in 15 days, *De la Comédie-Française* is an exuberant backstage comedy set in the frantic world of France's national theatre company. With three hours to go before the premiere of a new *Macbeth*, an actress making her debut as a director must steer her troupe through a cascade of theatrical disasters — because at the Comédie-Française, the show is never cancelled. The joke, of course, lies in the collision between an august cultural institution and the ordinary chaos of live theatre.

The title plays on the company's formal designation: its actors are always described as being "of the Comédie-Française". The film gently punctures the institution's grandeur without losing sight of the collective discipline and excellence that ensure, above all, that the curtain rises. It is French comedy at its finest and most universal.

Esprit de corps

In my Breton paradise this week, the sun seemed to disappear, if only for a few minutes. The scramble for certified eclipse glasses made the headlines, and Ouest-France was full of pictures of hundreds queueing outside pharmacies in the hope of acquiring the precious glasses needed to watch it without risking damage to their eyesight. The evening before, I had scoped out the ideal spot: a west-facing bridge beside Dinard's very own Anglican church. The four of us shared two pairs, surrounded by an international crowd who, despite their different languages, stood together, looking in the same direction.

In a world drunk on division, this was a much needed, if brief, respite. Seeing so many people united by an event that required nothing of us except to stop, watch and wonder was oddly moving. And after 45 weeks of looking down at my screen, what joy finally to look up at the sky.

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Remember education is a lifelong process

God bless the autodidacts — whatever your A-level results, take life's opportunities to keep on learning new skills

Libby Purves

@LIB_THINKS

Of all human energies, I respect autodidacticism: the ability and will to teach yourself, seeking guidance rather than waiting for it. I married a serial spare-time autodidact who taught himself to sail, crossing the North Sea with tiller in one hand and book in the other, then learnt organic farming and heavy-horsemanship by watching, listening and studying current and historic texts. Now it's cooking, discovering how to construct anything from scratch. Even if it's haggis.

As a bookish ham-fist, whose self-improvement in lockdown didn't even master knitting or finish Tom Whipple's guide to GCSE physics, I admire lone students because lifelong learning is both gift and virtue. TH White's famous line from *The Once and Future King* affirms that to learn is "the only thing that never fails ... the only thing which the mind can never exhaust, never alienate, never be tortured by, never fear or distrust, never dream of regretting". As a motto for life it's up there with Admiral William H McRaven's bark: "If you want to change the world, start off by making your bed." It's vital energy: do something, learn something, move on.

From birth, babies' hands reach out to grasp and wobble things of which they know nothing. Later, a child with sand and a bucket is studying physics, architecture, the use of tools, resistant-materials technology and, if dolls are involved, drama. They may even croon an original soundtrack. Adults should watch respectfully, hoping that this boundless hunger doesn't desert the child as years go by and information is narrowed and pleated into orderly shapes designed by older, deader minds. We need them curious,

> Going to university can be like a thrilling dash for freedom

though it means surveillance (aged three I poked bare wires into a socket in Bangkok and vividly remember the sparks as frankly thrilling). Handing these small pioneers over to schools, we hope it won't make learning a chore, something to be tested on and fail at.

Last week it was A-levels; on Thursday it's GCSE and some levels of Btec and City and Guilds. Decisions rest on those 1-9 numbers and some hard judgments will slam a door: I still resent being barred from maths A-level in favour of history. My grades implied I was no Einstein, but numbers and formulae felt more stimulating than the Hundred Years' War. Right now there will be kids who, on the contrary, rather fancy A-level archaeology but whose elders are so dazzled by their brilliance in science and maths that they make them stick at Stem. Others will be steered towards — or away from — a technical training. It all feeds anxiety.

A-level results bring an even bigger decision. University means a student loan, a debt designed under "Plan 2" as an actively wicked exploitation of youthful hope. But university is structured, supposedly well-mentored, offering life with your own age group and a new city. If you're from a remote rural or coastal enclave, that's a thrilling break for freedom as well as a chance to become a "graduate". But it can be just a delaying tactic against life: how else to explain the plethora of courses that are barely more than hobbies and won't earn a job?

As for other paths, to win a well-run apprenticeship at 16 is actually a lot harder than getting a clearing place at any-old-university. It can work: I've seen bright teenagers go straight into training as boatbuilders, container-port managers, retail bankers, dressmakers. All thrive, the training often as tough as any degree course. But such chances are scarce and enrolling at a local college for anything from electrical engineering to childcare, commuting through familiar streets from your childhood bedroom, can be dispiriting when friends head for "uni".

Choices and chances: hopeful young humans deserve good wishes at a tough moment, and not all know which track even to hope for. Only a

> The sandpit thrill must survive and change lives, at least in morale

lucky few know from childhood that it's medicine, music, architecture, law, whatever: even they may not make it there. But the key thing is to remember, teach and emphasise daily that it's not yet over. Not at 16, not at 65. The sandpit thrill, the private quest, must survive and change lives if not professionally at least in morale.

Long after exams there are trails to follow: through libraries (or long-read information online instead of scrolling) to informational videos, podcasts or just asking nearby adults. It might be practical: rebuild a motorbike, make a garden or an outfit, sculpt, paint, lay a hedge. Or just dismantle discarded appliances found in a skip to find out how they work: that has self-trained some inventive engineers.

The learning itch can be flattened by dull teaching but suddenly flourish after a chance meeting or broadcast, and run alongside a paid job. History is crammed with autodidacts at all ages: Michael Faraday was a bookbinder's apprentice for seven years, went off-duty to public lectures, landed a menial job at the Royal Institution and eventually ran it. Jimi Hendrix, bored in the military, continued learning by ear, obsessively. At the other end of life find new-fledged academics, artists and entrepreneurs, or indeed Colonel Sanders failing at numerous careers in the Great Depression before finessing his chicken recipe while in his sixties.

TH White was right: never stop learning. From web design or silversmithing to carpentry and massage there are happy people refining their skills: interested, alive. Some even discover theology and take holy orders when they're over 60. The internet, usually decried as dumbing us all, also creates informal pockets of serious philosophical, historical, classical learning fed by new friendships, publications, arguments and journeys. Not everyone's brain and imagination has to shrink into vapid distraction and killing boredom. The inner child defies it.

Letters to the Editor

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Books at risk from short-form content

Sir, As a lifelong reader, I share James Marriott's sorrow at the decline of reading ("The death of reading puts the world in a perilous place", Aug 15). But it is important to be clear about the battleground: not books versus screens, but long form versus short form. Complexity is indispensable to making sense of the world, but the printed page should be seen as a means, not an end. What matters is time: the time to unfold a narrative, or develop an argument.

In long form, screens can serve democracy no less than books or newspapers, as *Mr Bates vs The Post Office* so powerfully demonstrated. In short form, however, the printed word can be as misleading and inflammatory as any social media post, as the pamphleteering of the French Revolution proved. The tragedy is that during the past decade, short form has exploded, threatening not just literature but public service broadcasting too. The challenge is not to save books from screens, but to preserve our capacity for sustained attention in whatever medium.
Alf Lawrie
Former head of factual entertainment, Channel 4; Amersham, Bucks

Sir, What an excellent analysis of reading by James Marriott. It's sad that only readers will read it.
Paul Smith
Methwold, Norfolk

Perils of stairs

Sir, Regarding the health benefits of stair-climbing (letter, Aug 15) and the risks of descending stairs, many single escalators in public places travel upwards only. Perhaps they should be reversed to encourage climbing and reduce the risk of falling — a double benefit?
Professor emeritus Garth Johnson
Holmcliffe, Co Durham

Sir, An alarming number of people over 60 die each year from falling downstairs, including Laura Ashley. That is why I mutter "remember Laura" as I cling to the banister rail, trying to avoid being tripped up by my over-enthusiastic labrador.
Tim Brown
Sidmouth, Devon

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Corrections and clarifications

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Public scrutiny and the death of Jason Arday

Sir, The death of Jason Arday is a tragedy, and my sincere condolences go to his loved ones ("Row professor found dead", Aug 15). I know from bitter personal experience what it is to find oneself at the centre of a public scandal. The pressure generated by relentless allegations, speculation and public commentary is immense. Public figures and institutions must, of course, be subject to legitimate scrutiny. But scrutiny should never cause us to forget the human being at its centre. When accusation and commentary become relentless, the consequences can be profound and, in the most tragic circumstances, fatal.
Harvey Proctor
President, Facing Allegations in Contexts of Trust; Grantham, Lincs

Sir, I was an academic from 1994 to 2017 and saw much fraudulent behaviour. The perpetrators were white, because most academics are. All were promoted. The question is not whether Jason Arday was promoted because he was a black man but whether others were protected because they were white men.
Farah Mendlesohn
Professor emerita, Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge

Sir, Jason Arday spoke at Farrer & Co's safeguarding conference in 2022, which was examining the context of race in child and adolescent safeguarding. He exhibited intelligence, modesty, patience and understanding. If it turns out that he made errors of judgment, then he was only human, like the rest of us. Unlike many in this age he was big enough to resign. The bitterness of the attacks on him was out of all proportion and without due regard to his welfare. He did not deserve to be treated like that.
David Smellie
Partner and head of safeguarding unit, Farrer & Co, London WC2

Sir, The distressing Jason Arday affair has highlighted the strange system used by Cambridge (and Oxford) to appoint candidates to professorial chairs. A board of seven to nine electors consisting of university and college administrators, a couple of members of the relevant department and one or two outside experts is appointed for each chair. This undemocratic approach can lead to "groupthink", and to conflict in the department and university, as appears to have been the case for Arday and, 35 years ago, me. In US universities, all members of the faculty of the relevant department discuss all candidates and vote on new appointments. If this system had been used, any academic issues, questions of inclusivity, plagiarism or untruths could have been expressed and resolved prior to an offer being made.
Bernard Wood
Emeritus professor, University of Oxford; Ramsden, Oxon

Sir, Jason Arday's appointment required collective wishful thinking. Choosing a target demographic for candidates subverts fairness and sidelines objective examination of ability, achievement and suitability.
Dorothea Vidion
Felton, Northumberland

Sir, Accusations of plagiarism in academia are not uncommon, and in the case of Jason Arday they were dealt with appropriately by the relevant institutions. Not since the tragic case of David Kelly, the Iraq war weapons expert, has there been such public vilifying of an individual, with the same outcome. Let's never see this happen again.
Dr Catriona Farrell
West Kirby, Merseyside

Reckless alerts

Sir, The government alert on Friday evening was reckless ("Burnham calls up the military to tackle fires", Aug 15). I fully understand the seriousness of the fires, the hazards faced by the emergency services and the importance of the public playing their part. However, I was driving and the alert took my focus off the road. Once I realised the noise came from the phone and not the car, I wanted to see what it said but could not stop safely.
Geoffrey Silman
London NW3

Sir, Was there a terrorist attack? Was my village threatened by a Russian drone? Was a gang shootout about to happen? Was my family in danger? No to all of the above. The shrill, unstoppable screaming of the alert message that nearly blew my Bluetooth hearing aids apart was to say I shouldn't use a throwaway barbecue or light a fire. It was the wrong use of emergency texting. Bring back the Central Office of Information and its film unit.
Barnaby Lawrence
Ockham, Surrey

Sir, Despite living in a village in which the majority of homes are thatched, surrounded by tinder-dry pasture and woodland, my mobile phone remained silent during Andy Burnham's wildfire alert. With the imminent removal of landlines it will also be impossible to dial 999 during a power cut if the place goes up in flames after a picnicker decides to spark up an illicit disposable barbecue. Maybe it is time to look again at rural connectivity in Britain.
Simon Tiffin
Beaminster, Dorset

Watering trees

Sir, We have noticed some of the trees, young and old, in our neighbourhood are dying or dead in the dry, hot weather (letter, Aug 15). To save the ones closest to home we water them regularly, especially when there is no rain or the temperature is high. It's easy to do and is included in our daily local walks.
Isla Robert
Solihull, West Midlands

Sir, Could one of the farmers in Jonathan Tulloch's family (Nature Notebook, Aug 15) offer him a couple of days working the tractor-mounted hedge trimmer? That would swiftly put paid to his plea for farmers to leave one full-grown tree in every 20 yards of hedge.
Charlie Flindt
Hinton Ampner, Hants

Barbecue dangers

Sir, I must disagree with Nick MacAndrew (letter, Aug 14) about the "minutiae minister" and think Andy Burnham is right about disposable barbeques. In Studland Bay, our top concerns are heathland fires and the danger they pose to the environment, residents and visitors. We have had at least three such fires in the past three years, and disposable barbecues were the likely cause of all three.
Nick Boulter
Chairman, Studland parish council; Studland, Dorset

Sir, It is fortunate that we no longer have the coal-fired steam engines of my youth that spread embers through the countryside.
John Stanley
Ponteland, Northumberland

THE PLAN TO MAKE A HUGE WATERFALL

FROM THE TIMES AUGUST 17, 1926

Malham Cove, the tarn of the same name and the limestone gorge called Gordale form a group of natural features surrounding the sources of the River Aire in Yorkshire. The imposing amphitheatral wall of Malham Cove has just had a fine advertisement from the astonishing suggestion, made in all seriousness, that England's greatest waterfall might be created by inducing a natural stream to flow over the edge.

The Rev Charles L Tweedale, vicar of Weston, near Otley, would persuade us that the outflow from Malham Tarn, which at present disappears into the ground at a spot marked Watersinks on the ordnance map, one mile north of the precipice, could, with a minimum of engineering, be caused to continue its course above ground till it reached the upper edge of the great cliff. Thence, as the summit of the cliff overhangs its base by several feet, the water would descend in one magnificent bound of 286 feet. Thus, according to Mr Tweedale, would be realized "a notable addition to the interest and beauty of one of the most romantic districts in this country and the creating of the highest waterfall in England".

So far as I have been able to ascertain, Mr Tweedale is wide of the mark in his prophecy that Yorkshire people will see this scheme through. The villagers at Malham are, to begin with, distinctly alarmed. They repudiate Mr Tweedale's assertion that the stream issuing from the base of the cliff at Malham Cove is the same as that which, flowing from Malham Tarn, disappears in the spongy plateau above, and they declare that any water which came over the cliff would be an addition to the water in Malham Beck, and would so swell that stream as to render their village, which it traverses, uninhabitable.

Some years ago Mr Walter Morrison, of Malham Tarn House, went to considerable expense in the effort to determine with sawdust and with dyes what became of the overflow water from Malham Tarn. It was thereby proved that the tarn had no connexion with the stream issuing from Malham Cove.

Tweedale's plan did not proceed, but in December 2015 heavy rain briefly brought the waterfall back to life.

THETIMES.COM/ARCHIVE

Seatbelts on trains

Sir, Dudley Pound (letter, Aug 15) wonders why train passengers are allowed to travel without any form of restraint. Having been an advocate at Lord Cullen's inquiry into the Ladbroke Grove collision, I have been through this debate several times. The cost of fitting seatbelts alone would fail any cost-benefit analysis: there were 1,538 road fatalities in Great Britain last year, yet since 2007 only two passengers have been killed in a moving train accident.

But practicality is a bigger issue. We have a "walk up" railway, enabling a passenger who is prepared to stand to join an already full train. Should the use of seatbelts be compulsory? What would passengers denied access do — use the much more dangerous roads? The best evidence is that the Rail Safety and Standards Board carried out comprehensive research on this point, concluding in Project T201 that the provision of seatbelts would increase fatalities and injuries, rather than reduce them.
Clive Fletcher-Wood
Bristol

Asylum seekers

Sir, Surely the obvious solution to housing asylum seekers in ex-military bases as well as safeguarding the local population is not to let asylum applicants leave the base? I cannot see how an asylum seeker's boredom would be alleviated by wandering around a village with no shop or pub.
Kate Currie
Liverpool

Cambridge PMs

Sir, Your story ("Burnham's nerve-settler at pub before interview", Aug 14) says Andy Burnham is "the first prime minister to have completed his undergraduate degree at Cambridge since Stanley Baldwin". This is not so — he is not even the first prime minister to graduate from Fitzwilliam. That honour goes to Lee Kuan Yew, prime minister of Singapore.
Charles Kellett
Gressenhall, Norfolk

Puzzling hunters

Sir, Further to Johnny Longley's letter (Aug 15), it has always puzzled me that hunters in France tend to wear camouflage trousers and jackets to blend in with the countryside and then defeat their intent by putting a bright orange vest over the top to avoid accidentally shooting each other.
Paul Brown
Eymet, France

In for a penny

Sir, Should we now be considering spending a pound rather than a penny to use public lavatories? ("Surge pricing for public loos is a new low from councils", Aug 14).
Pat Morgan
Reigate, Surrey

Fly in the ointment

Sir, I can sympathise with Ann Treneman's fly-swatting efforts (Notebook, Aug 15). I took aim with a carefully folded napkin during Sunday lunch recently, missed the fly but hit a piece of furniture and broke my index finger.
Sue Gillings
Amberley, W Sussex

Daily Universal Register

Nominations close for Scottish Labour leadership election; celebration of life for the singer Bonnie Tyler at Swansea Minster.

Nature notes

The huge, trunk-like caterpillar of the elephant hawk-moth is usually brown, but can sometimes be lime green. They reach full size in late summer, at which point they climb down from the vegetation where they've been feeding (they particularly like fuchsias and willowherb) and march about, looking for a safe spot in which to bury themselves; this is when they are most commonly seen. They can retract their heads and rear up so that the spots on their body resemble eyes; this is often enough to deter predators. The caterpillars of the privet hawk-moth, lime hawk-moth and small elephant hawk-moth are also large and superficially similar. They will overwinter in cocoons and emerge as adults next May.
MELISSA HARRISON

Birthdays today

Robert De Niro, *pictured*, actor, *The Godfather Part II* (1974), 83; **Sir Ian Blatchford**, director and chief executive, Science Museum and the Science Museum Group, 61; **Lady Colin Campbell**, royal biographer and socialite, 77; **Robin Cousins**, figure skater, Olympic gold medallist (1980), president, British Ice Skating (2021-Feb 2026), and head judge, *Dancing on Ice* (2006-14), 69; **Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi**, Labour MP, chairman of the defence select committee, 48; **Air Vice-Marshal Simon Ellard**, general manager, Nato Eurofighter and Tornado Management Agency, 59; **Larry Ellison**, businessman, founder (1977), chairman and chief technology officer, Oracle Corporation, 82; **Lord (Julian) Fellowes of West Stafford**, screenwriter, *Gosford Park* (2001), 77; **Lord (Christopher) Geidt**, chairman, King's College Council, private secretary to Queen Elizabeth II (2007-17), 65; **Elly Griffiths (Domenica de Rosa)**, novelist, the Dr Ruth Galloway mysteries, 63; **Margaret Hamilton**, Nasa scientist whose software helped the Apollo 11 space mission to land on the moon in 1969, 90; **Thierry Henry**, footballer, France (1997-2010) and Arsenal (1999-2007), 49; **John Humphrys**, presenter, *Today* programme, BBC Radio 4 (1987-2019), 83; **Dame Mary Marsh**, chairwoman, Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health, 80; **Lord (Iain) McNicol of West Kilbride**, general secretary of the Labour Party (2011-18), 57; **Katherine Mathieson**, director, The Royal Institution, 51; **John May**, chief executive, Cats Protection, 62; **Prof Carole Mundell**, astrophysicist, director of science, European Space Agency, and head of the European Space Astronomy Centre, 57; **Catherine Royle**, diplomat, principal of Somerville College, Oxford, 63; **Janet Truncale**, global chairwoman and chief executive, EY, 56; **Ed Warner**, chairman, GB Wheelchair Rugby, 63.

On this day

In 1980 nine-week-old Azaria Chamberlain was taken by a dingo from a tent near Uluru in Australia. Her mother was wrongly convicted of murder in 1982. In 1986 Azaria's jacket was found near a dingo's lair.

The last word

"It takes two to speak the truth, — one to speak, and another to hear." Henry David Thoreau, writer, *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* (1849)

Fire and Water

Most of the wildfires have been quenched, but Britain faces massive losses if measures to prevent future droughts are not put into effect immediately

As wildfires continue to burn across England and Wales and devastated homeowners return to the charred remains of their houses, the latest government warnings on how to avoid setting the tinderbox south alight may seem banal: don't use disposable barbecues, don't light garden incinerators and don't set off fireworks. The warnings rang out on millions of mobile phones last week in one of the biggest uses yet of the emergency alert system. They were dismissed by many people as intrusive and unnecessary. They were not.

Britain is facing a huge environmental and economic challenge caused by record-breaking temperatures and prolonged drought. Closing swimming pools and car washes and turning off fountains will not end the emergency; it will make people more aware of a long-term threat to the country's wellbeing, economy and landscape.

The heat will eventually subside. But even if rain brings relief in a week or so, the long-term effects of drought are severe. Five key reservoirs in England and Wales are "exceptionally low", despite plentiful rain this past winter. Across the country crops are failing. The harvest will be disastrous: vegetables will be shrivelled, parched fields will provide little animal fodder and gardens will be laid waste. Despite new water use dispensations and a promised £15 million fund to build on-farm reservoirs to bolster resilience, some farmers face ruin.

Only once before has England seen drought on this scale. That was in 1976, the previous record-breaking hot summer, when the Birmingham MP Denis Howell was appointed "minister for drought", charged with persuading Britons to use less water. He was even ordered by No 10 to do a rain dance on behalf of the nation. Within days a deluge began that went on so long that floods were widespread. The nation laughed, and forgot it all.

Britain has paid for such insouciance. No new reservoirs have been built since 1991-92, despite a rapidly growing population, especially in the southeast, the driest part of the country. A number are now planned, but the first two will not be completed until 2036 and 2040. The Environment Agency has estimated that England's public water supply could face a shortfall of five billion litres a day by 2055 without urgent action.

Much of that action should have been provided by the water companies. They have culpably failed to invest in infrastructure and maintenance. As a result, millions of litres a day are lost through leaks and pipe breakages. Even in this parched summer, communities have been aghast to see water gushing from leaks in city centres hour upon hour. This government has promised severe punishments and special administration for some of the worst-performing water companies. But it is, often literally, water under the bridge.

Part of the difficulty of coping with the present drought is the obvious effect of climate change. All but the most wilfully blind now accept the link between carbon emissions and global warming. But the need for international co-operation in an unstable world and the arguments over net zero mean that many voters despair of any swift action.

A second factor that should puncture complacency is the rapid building of data centres, especially in populated areas. These use an enormous amount of water to cool their massive computing systems, taking it directly from the main water network to ensure it is free from contaminants. A data centre can use up to 19 million litres of water a day, about the same as a town of 50,000 people. There are proposals for other cooling systems, but few incentives to accelerate this.

The public are fortunate that our overworked firefighting services have performed so impressively in coping with the disasters. Voters now need to focus on how to prevent any repeat of such emergencies.

Rogue Cyclists

The penalties for jumping red lights should be enforced and increased

For more than a decade, cycling, especially in cities, has enjoyed a boom. Encouraged by the so-called "Boris bikes" — the former London mayor's cycles for hire — the boom has been powered, literally, by the recent flood of e-bikes, which now zip at alarming speeds through most of Britain's city centres. Indeed the capital's pavements are now cluttered with Lime bikes, abandoned after the riders have reached their destinations, and left lying on their sides. A day after the eclipse, a mountain of abandoned bikes almost covered Primrose Hill, a London viewing point chosen by hundreds of enthusiasts who had cycled up the incline.

Cycling is healthy, quick, quiet, clean and cheap. It should be encouraged by all Britain's municipal authorities and in the countryside, where dedicated cycle trails draw people of all ages. Cycling as a sport is also a source of growing national pride. But with popularity come issues that must be addressed if cyclists, and particularly power-assisted bicycles, are not to be seen as an urban menace. The first, and most dangerous, is the appalling refusal of many cyclists to halt at traffic lights. Last year ITV cameras caught some 200 cyclists jumping red lights in the space of one hour during the London morning rush. All too often there is an arrogant entitlement, as well as an almost suicidal disregard for others, among those who force motorists to swerve dangerously.

The government has proposed harsher penalties for "dangerous, careless or inconsiderate cycling". But enforcement is difficult: unless the police are able to give chase immediately, there is little hope of catching offenders. And although the numbers fined in London have doubled in a year, the fixed penalty notices are derisory. An obvious solution would be to affix licence plates on all power-assisted bikes so that they can be identified by cameras. Indeed pedal bikes should also be registered: partly to curb dangerous cycling and partly to tackle the increasing number of thefts.

The powerful cycling lobby opposes any such step. But it should consider the other big issue that is essential: compulsory insurance of power-assisted bicycles, with the hire companies bearing the cost. These companies should also reduce risk by changing the hire charge from time to distance. There is every incentive for cyclists to ride dangerously if faster travel means lower charges.

Municipal authorities have also contributed to confusion over regulation. Why should different bike hire companies be allowed sole operation? By its nature, cycling crosses borders. Cycling should of course be made safer, but it is short-sighted to expand cycle lanes at the expense of road space, so that road users, including buses, taxis and delivery vehicles, are trapped in ever more frustrating gridlock.

It is not only reckless cycling that can cost lives. Electric scooters are a new thrill, and many riders disregard all the rules. Not only do they terrorise pedestrians on pavements, they also weave in and out of traffic, with the rider so precariously exposed that any collision could be life-threatening. E-scooters can be hired through official rental schemes but they are illegal to ride in public when privately owned. That rule is being flouted.

This newspaper has long championed cycling. But unless its new powered incarnation is better regulated, it will be seen by many as a nuisance rather than a smart form of urban transport.

Grandmasters

Two young British chess champions highlight the game's growing popularity

Aged 11, Bodhana Sivanandan has become Britain's youngest women's chess champion. It is a source of enormous and deserved pride to her parents, her country and above all to British chess, which is enjoying a powerful renaissance and well-deserved acclaim throughout the world. Her achievement , which has astonished her rivals, is matched by that of Shreyas Royal, who has scooped the British men's title at 17, also an unprecedentedly early age, and has shown extraordinary talent for the game ever since becoming Britain's youngest ever grandmaster in 2024.

Both are from families of Indian origin, a source of pride to the Indian community and one that says much about the sense of dedication and ambition prevalent in many Indian heritage families. They were both stars of the recent British chess championships, held at the University of Warwick, which were the biggest in its 122-year history, with more than 2,600 entries across all events. Sadly, it was too late to register Shreyas Royal for the five-man England squad for next month's 210-team world Olympiad in Samarkand, Uzbekistan.

This newspaper has long championed chess, reflecting, perhaps, the enthusiasm among our readers (and also the large number of our reporters playing the game). The Times has boasted distinguished grandmasters as our chess correspondents over many years. It is therefore all the more pleasing that the government also sees the value of one of the world's oldest and most intellectually stretching games, one that combines concentration and focus with mental agility. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has an elite chess fund of £250,000 a year until 2029.

Chess, once almost a Soviet preserve, used to be freighted with politics. Luckily that is less prevalent now. The competitive spirit has never lagged, however, as Britain's two young champions show.

World

Germany's race to rearm 'threatens to destabilise EU'

Historian confronts the risks of appeasing Russia, or making neighbours nervous, writes **Oliver Moody**

The Bundeswehr, the German armed forces, were steadily dismantled after the Cold War. But since Russia's invasion of Ukraine it has been rebuilding them at pace. As the US pulls away from Europe, Germany is set to play a bigger role in regional defence

At the beginning of 1990, as Germany cantered towards reunification, Margaret Thatcher was fuming.

She showed the French president, François Mitterrand, a map of the Third Reich's 1937 borders to illustrate what she saw as the risk posed by the sheer heft of a reunified Germany.

Mitterrand concurred, fretting that a future generation of "bad" Germans might one day "make more ground than even Adolf had".

So far, their apocalyptic fears have been entirely misplaced. But a book by a foreign policy expert argues that the age-old "German question" is returning as the country rearms on a scale not seen since the Cold War.

Liana Fix, a German historian at the Council on Foreign Relations think tank in Washington, suggests that her nation's postwar "myth of pacifism" and "intellectual dependence" on the United States for its strategic direction have left it ill-prepared for its re-emergence as a great military power.

In *Germany Rearmed: The Return of War and the End of Illusions*, Fix entertains near-future scenarios in which the country's newfound clout could cause serious problems for its neighbours, particularly as the US withdraws its security guarantees for Europe.

These range from a progressive appeasement of Russia, leading to a "de facto neutralised western European political sphere", to an unravelling of the European project or even active military coercion if the hard-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) party comes to power.

The book is based on an essay for Foreign Affairs magazine that produced such a stir that Friedrich Merz, the German chancellor, summoned Fix for a dinner discussion during a recent visit to the US.

Fix's logic has not been universally welcomed in Berlin. "[Some officials say] 'this is exaggerating the problem, you are feeding suspicions by writing about it'," she said. "I would say that not talking about or not naming the risks will not make the risks go away ... It's not about whether Germany should rearm — it absolutely should — but about how Germany should rearm."

After 1990 Germany steadily dismantled much of the Bundeswehr, its armed forces. Since 2022, however, it has been rebuilding them at an accelerating pace. By 2029 its annual defence expenditure is expected to exceed €150 billion, more than the British and French budgets put together.

Fix makes the case that Germany's attenuated strategic culture and post-1945 squeamishness about war have resulted in an ideological vacuum around the purpose that all this power should serve in a world where the US no longer provides Europe with its protection and geopolitical direction. The danger is that, if Nato begins to fray, tensions may resurface between European states.

Fix is not the first scholar to raise concerns about where this could lead. In 1990 the American theorist of international relations John Mearsheimer published a notoriously bleak essay titled *Back to the Future*, warning that Europe could revert to its pre-1945 state of conflict as the common purpose of the Cold War evaporated.

Liana Fix, a historian, says the so-called German question would be "dangerous to ignore"

Up to now, Mearsheimer's nightmare has not been realised. However, although there is no realistic prospect of war between European Union members, Fix's book argues that the American retreat from the continent may erode one of the load-bearing pillars of its postwar order.

"I'm afraid that in Europe we live under the illusion that it was the EU alone that brought peace to the continent and ended great power rivalry in Europe. But that's only part of the story," Fix said.

One big accelerant in this process is the rise of the AfD and nationalist political vehicles in European neighbours.

Although there are strong pacifist elements within the AfD, its official security policy revolves around rapid rearmament and a return to conscription, with a pivot towards homeland defence and a deep scepticism of Nato.

The party is campaigning for an immediate detente with Russia. Some of its leading politicians have flirted with nostalgia for the parts of western Poland that were German territory before 1945, although this remains a fringe phenomenon even on the populist right.

"Many fear that the AfD could use military power for power projection against its neighbours while appeasing Russia, just as former British prime minister Margaret Thatcher feared in 1990," Fix writes. "To make matters worse, this would go hand in hand with appeasement of Russia ... 'over the heads of the peoples between'. Eastern Europe would be fearful of becoming a zone of influence in a dual hegemony of Germany and Russia in Europe."

Even if the AfD is held at bay, though, Fix is troubled by Germany's failure to anchor its defence policy in an explicitly European spirit. France and other neighbours are irritated by its tendency to funnel money towards German arms manufacturers and its reluctance to help neighbouring states raise funds for their own defence spending.

Fix argues that the present German leaders should allay these concerns by using "golden handcuffs" to constrain their power, much as Helmut Kohl did to shore up support for reunification at the dawn of the 1990s. This would include embracing European defence bonds and trying to procure more munitions jointly with other countries.

Fix said that German leaders' understanding that they had to limit their country's hegemony to win acceptance from other European states had "faded". She said: "They were told for so long that Germany is not doing enough on defence that they can't fathom they have to constrain [their state]. That's also their short-sighted response, 'You asked us to rearm and now we should put on golden handcuffs?' "

Although some foreign policy thinkers have suggested that Berlin should be open to pursuing a nuclear deterrent, Fix believes a German atom bomb would be "the end of Europe". She said: "That's the one [intolerable] step towards too much German power for Poland and France."

Twelve killed in waves of missile and drone strikes

At least 12 people died early yesterday in drone and missile strikes between Russia and Ukraine, according to officials in the two countries (Tom Parfitt writes).

Russian attacks killed a man and a woman at their home in the Zaporizhzhia region of Ukraine. Two more people died in Kryvyi Rih, President Zelensky's home town, and one person was killed in the city of Sumy.

The deaths in Kryvyi Rih were at the ArcelorMittal steel and mining plant, where a strike damaged production facilities, it said.

More than 20 people were reported to have been injured in Kyiv, Brovary, Kryvyi Rih, Odesa and Dnipropetrovsk.

Vitali Klitschko, the mayor of Kyiv, told residents to stay in shelters as ballistic missiles struck the Obolonskyi and Holosiivskyi districts, causing fires. In the former, a book market close to the Pochaina metro station was destroyed.

In Russia, Yury Slyusar, governor of the southern Rostov region, said that five people had died in Ukrainian attacks on three towns.

The Russian ministry of defence said that the overnight Ukrainian attack had affected 16 Russian regions, as well as annexed Crimea and the Black Sea. It said that 822 drones had been shot down.

Sergei Sobyanin, the mayor of Moscow, said that 600 Ukrainian drones had been detected heading towards the capital and that a third of them had been destroyed.

Andrey Vorobyov, the governor, said that an 83-year-old man was killed in the Moscow region when a Ukrainian drone hit a private home. A local official said that another person had been killed when a Ukrainian drone hit a bus in the city of Belgorod.

Ukrainian forces also launched an attack on buildings belonging to the Russian online retailer Wildberries, hitting a

Settler violence tests US–Israeli alliance

Israel

Gabrielle Weiniger

When Palestinian city workers tried to restore the electricity to homes in the West Bank village of Qusra on Sunday, Israeli settlers drove their jeeps in circles around the perimeter as others went in, on the attack.

The electricians were forced to retreat from the village, where dozens of fanatical Israelis were trying to intimidate residents and move in to the homes of three of them, attempts by the army to remove them.

The settlers' tactics of encircling homes, driving out residents and cutting off food and water to take over their land prompted an unprecedented denunciation by the United States last week — signs of a rift that could result in America trying to enforce its Gaza peace plan on the West Bank.

The Trump administration was reported to be pushing Binyamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, to denounce the violence. Mike Huckabee, the ambassador to Israel and a strong supporter of Jewish settlement of the West Bank, described the settlers as "Israeli terrorists".

Netanyahu has yet to publicly condemn the violence over which Israeli soldiers have been deployed since Thursday to "protect residents and maintain security". He is probably

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FRANCISCO SECO/AP; GLEB GARANICH/REUTERS

A bookseller in Kyiv after a Russian strike destroyed the market

warehouse in Koledino, 30 miles south of Moscow. Kyiv has accused the retailer of handling military goods.

The Ukrainian armed forces said yesterday that they had targeted a Russian missile unit in Crimea, a railway bridge and storage facilities in occupied areas of the Zaporizhzhia and Donetsk regions, and a missile fuel production facility in the Rostov region.

For the second time in days, a Nato jet had to shoot down a drone straying from the warzone into a neighbouring country. Radu Miruta, the Romanian defence minister, said that two Spanish F-18s had intercepted and destroyed the drone at 5.01am local time, close to the border with Moldova. Nato said it appeared to be Russian.

Margus Tsahkna, the Estonian foreign minister, said Nato had "once again demonstrated its readiness and ability to defend every inch of allied territory". He added: "The threat to Nato will persist as long as Russia continues its war of aggression against Ukraine."

On Friday, an Italian Eurofighter jet on a Nato mission shot down an unidentified drone over Latvian airspace.

seeking to placate his right-wing voter base and coalition partners — some of whom lead the settler movement — but must also keep onside his American allies, already frustrated by his conduct in Gaza and Lebanon.

President Trump has repeatedly stopped short of endorsing Netanyahu in the Israeli election that will be held on October 27. According to Axios, Trump said that Netanyahu was "his own worst enemy" and pointedly asked him when they met in Washington last month how he was doing in the polls.

Support for Likud, Netanyahu's party, has fallen in recent weeks. The party holds its primaries for candidates today, and the results will be seen as a bellwether for how far to the right it has swung since Netanyahu's 2022 return.

A Maariv survey showed that support for Netanyahu's party weakened this week by the equivalent of one seat, falling to 21. Its strongest rival, Yashar, led by Gadi Eisenkot, nudged ahead to 23 seats. Although both parties look set to fall short of a majority, the leader with the most seats will have the best chance of building a coalition with smaller parties.

Israeli settlers besiege the Palestinian village of Qusra in the West Bank

Political commentators have said that Netanyahu is at a juncture, increasingly diverging with Washington. Last week he openly rejected the US peace plan for Gaza announced by Trump. In his statement on the war in Lebanon on Saturday night, he accused Hezbollah of using "human shields" to justify a large-scale attack across the border. The US is trying to broker a peace deal with Lebanon, as in Gaza.

Michael Milshtein, head of the Palestinian Studies Forum at the Moshe Dayan Center at the Tel Aviv University, said: "Netanyahu is stuck in a Catch-22 situation on the eve of elections, on one hand demonstrating himself as a tough nationalist full of achievements ... on the other, he doesn't want a headache or to invoke tensions with the US.

The coalition parties led by Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich, heads of the settler movement, are predicted to lose seats in October, and Smotrich's party to fail to cross the electoral threshold, indicating voters' doubts over the annexation ambitions.

If settler violence increases, the US is likely to advance its peace plan for Gaza, including the creation of a Palestinian state. That wider vision encompasses the West Bank in a unification with Gaza which Netanyahu has dedicated his long political career to blocking.

Senator tipped to unite Democrats like Obama did

United States
George Grylls Washington

The vigour with which Jon Ossoff has batted away questions about a run for president in 2028 has led to comparisons with a youthful senator who made similar promises two decades ago.

"I will not run," Barack Obama said in 2006, showing that coyness might often be the key to a successful campaign.

Ossoff's denials appear to be fooling no one. The 39-year-old senator from Georgia has emerged as a favourite for the Democratic nomination, viewed as someone who can unite the party.

Channelling the righteous fury of a Southern minister, his speeches denouncing corruption in politics have made Democrats swoon. He has popularised the term "Epstein class" and often uses Biblical language — "I believe we will overcome this wickedness" — to slam the Trump administration.

Former presidential aides on the podcast *Pod Save America* cheered him on. Dan Pfeiffer, Obama's communications director, noted that Ossoff had "some of the same pauses, the same cadence" but that "it doesn't look like Obama karaoke".

"He's a great communicator," David Axelrod, Obama's elections guru, said.

A year ago, an Ossoff candidacy was judged no more likely than that of Dwayne "the Rock" Johnson, the actor and former professional wrestler.

This summer, however, Ossoff has overtaken Kamala Harris in the prediction markets and he is vying with Gavin Newsom, the California governor, and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, the New York congresswoman, to be considered the outright favourite for the 2028 Democratic nomination.

Ossoff says he is focused on winning his midterm Senate race in Georgia, an election that will be a test of his appeal to swing voters. A Fox News poll put him ahead by 13 points against Mike Collins, a Maga loyalist. Ossoff has raised a staggering $81 million, suggesting he would be able to pull in the donors required for a national campaign.

Oozing professionalism, Ossoff is adept at playing down the hype — he told the Atlanta Journal-Constitution that he had "zero interest" in running for president.

The clamour for him to run is symptomatic of party's desire to unite after a summer of infighting that culminated with the Senate primary in Michigan, where the pro-Palestinian progressive Abdul El-Sayed narrowly defeated the pro-Israel moderate Haley Stevens.

That campaign showed that the party's relationship with Israel remained a festering sore. Ossoff, who is Jewish, appears uniquely positioned to heal the divide. When he entered the Senate at the age of 33, Ossoff swore his oath to the US Constitution on a Torah from an Atlanta synagogue that was targeted by white supremacists during the Civil Rights struggle.

He has lambasted Binyamin Netanyahu's government and was one of the rebel senators who voted for Bernie Sanders's resolution in 2024 to block the sale of some weapons to Israel. "Yes, defend yourself. Yes, defeat your enemies. But have mercy for the innocent, restrain your own extremists and respect the interests of the United States," Ossoff said in a quietly furious speech on the Senate floor.

Hasan Piker, the left-wing political streamer, is an admirer, ranking Ossoff as his third-choice candidate, behind Ocasio-Cortez and Ro Khanna, the California congressman. "I think Jon Ossoff presents a unique vision," he said recently.

For all his momentum, some believe that Ossoff's efforts to occupy a middle ground between moderates and progressives will result in him being squeezed out, as Pete Buttigieg was in 2020. Ossoff will need to win comfortably in Georgia to prove his electability. His opponents have accused him of lacking real-world experience, given his cosseted upbringing as the privately-educated son of an Atlanta attorney.

Michael Kazin, the author of *What it Took to Win: A History of the Democratic Party*, said: "He's going to have to win by quite a sizable margin, I think close to ten points."

The victories of Bill Clinton in 1992 and 1996 and of Jimmy Carter in 1976 showed that Democrats could have success when fielding a Southern candidate in presidential elections, the Georgetown University lecturer added.

Like Carter, the only previous president from Georgia, Ossoff is trying to appeal to both black voters in Atlanta and white peanut farmers in the countryside in his Senate campaign.

Amy Morton, a Democratic political consultant from Georgia, said: "Democrats need more leaders who bring people together. He has demonstrated an ability to do that in Georgia."

A recent change to the Democratic primary calendar could favour a Southern candidate popular with black voters. Iowa and New Hampshire used to be the first campaign stops. Now, the initial primary will be held in South Carolina on January 22, 2028, giving momentum to whoever can win over the state's diverse electorate.

Jon Ossoff, the senator for Georgia

"These are serious times," Ossoff said, announcing his Senate re-election campaign last year. For now, he has ruled out a presidential campaign. But given that it is still two years before the election, it is little wonder many are thinking back to Obama's protestations.

Kazin said: "Obama is still the most popular figure in the party. If you're being compared to Obama, that's obviously a good thing."

World

China advances goal of toppling aircraft duopoly

China
Richard Spencer Beijing

By Asian standards, it is a small trip of two hours from Beijing to the Mongolian capital, Ulan Bator. However, it may prove a giant leap for China's ambition to challenge Boeing and Airbus.

Last week its leading passenger aircraft, the C919, made its first international flight, from Beijing to its neighbour across the Great Wall.

The C919's state-owned manufacturer Comac, whose aim is ultimately to break the Boeing and Airbus duopoly on international passenger planes, had passed a major test on Wednesday.

"Comac represents a foundational threat to the global aviation industry, one that, frankly, policymakers in Europe and the United States barely see," Stephen Ezell, a Washington-based analyst of technology industries, wrote before the flight.

Comac, the Commercial Aircraft Corporation of China, was founded in 2008 as Airbus was completing construction of its first assembly plant outside Europe, in the city of Tianjin, southeast of Beijing. Executives flew in to much fanfare when they opened it in September while local representatives held their breath. Chinese products still had a reputation for poor quality, which the airline industry could not tolerate.

But as it turned out, Tianjin's planes were fine. The real threat to Airbus came from the plant's success.

More than 40 C919 have been produced since but they have yet to receive approval for US and European airspace. Nevertheless, the ambition is there.

Beijing's co-operation with Airbus as a platform for Comac's development is modelled on the car industry, where China is already the world's leading exporter by volume, a feat unimaginable two or three decades ago.

The result, Ezell fears, may be that the West becomes overdependent on imports from its main strategic rival.

Even so, all is not lost for Boeing and Airbus. Comac is producing far fewer planes than it expected and is dependent on imported engines from a small group of companies including GE Aerospace, Safran and Rolls-Royce.

Perhaps the continuing rise of air travel may simply mean there is room for more than two global aircraft makers. Fast-growing Asian airlines have been complaining about slow delivery from the duopoly — Airbus and Boeing cannot make their planes fast enough.

Ceuta fears for women and girls despite border returns

Spain
David Sharrock Ceuta

The Spanish civil guard has said it is investigating 15 alleged cases of sexual assault, including one against a ten-year-old girl, in the north African city of Ceuta, deepening concerns about security after an unprecedented influx of immigrants crossed the border from Morocco last month.

Two suspects, who were among the 80,000 migrants who arrived last month, have been detained and at least one has been expelled to Morocco.

Spanish security forces have been deployed in Ceuta in far greater numbers than usual after a second influx was mostly prevented over the weekend.

Nearly 300 would-be immigrants were arrested as Morocco used dogs, tear gas and baton charges to break up crowds trying to reach the Spanish territory. Forty-six of those arrested were Moroccan and the others were from sub-Saharan Africa. Messages shared online had suggested that the border would be open.

In late July thousands of Moroccans, most of them young males, walked and swam around a breakwater into Ceuta, prompting Pedro Sánchez, the Spanish prime minister, to denounce an "attack and a violation" of Spain's sovereignty.

Although the vast majority of the immigrants have been returned, 9,000, including unaccompanied children, are believed still to be in Ceuta.

The 15 alleged sexual assaults represent complaints or police investigations, not prosecutions. Officers did not confirm that the suspects were all migrants. At least five alleged victims were treated in a specialist hospital unit, according to the authorities.

In the most recent incident, on Friday night, three people — apparently brothers — were alleged to have attacked a ten-year-old girl.

As security forces continue to comb buildings and round up migrants sleeping rough, a sports centre has been converted into accommodation for hundreds of girls, the vast majority of them from Morocco.

Ahmed Enfed-Dal, president of the neighbourhood association, said it was the only way to guarantee their safety, but added: "The authorities need to find a solution fast because we are just volunteering and we cannot look after them indefinitely."

Nearly 2,000 minors — who, by law, cannot be immediately deported — had been identified but officials said that number could double.

A woman, 62, in Ceuta awoke last week to find a migrant in bed with her.

MARIA ALEJANDRA/REUTERS

Thousands of migrants poured into Ceuta last month and many are now living on the streets

The man, a Moroccan who had convictions for assaults in Valencia, had scaled a building and entered through a balcony. He was arrested as he tried to flee across rooftops. A fast-track trial was held within hours and he was convicted of unlawful entry. The court imposed a two-year prison sentence, which was substituted by immediate expulsion from Spain.

Many taxi drivers are Muslims from the majority Moroccan population who arrived years ago. One, who asked not to be named, told The Times he feared that the local population would take it upon themselves to eject migrants hiding out in peripheral neighbourhoods such as Principe, where petty crime had risen. "If they are not sent back soon there will be trouble," he said.

In the Hadu neighbourhood, there was more sympathy for the new arrivals who were sleeping on the streets. Some were feeding them and even washing their clothes. "There is nothing for them in Morocco, no work, no hope. What would you do in their shoes?" Karim, a resident, said.

The owner of a men's clothes shop said he had caught one migrant trying ineptly to steal a shirt in a deliberate effort to be arrested. "He said that he'd spent four nights sleeping rough on a hillside and he couldn't take any more, he just wanted to be taken into custody so he'd get something to eat and a bed."

Mónica Garcia, Sánchez's health minister, visited the city yesterday and criticised "alarmist" reports that health services were teetering. "There is no sanitary collapse ... there is a humanitarian crisis. Yes, there is a public health risk, arising from overcrowding," she said. "Linking immigration to disease — it's unjust and xenophobic. Linking immigration to crime and danger is unfair and xenophobic."

Iranians offer $30,000 bounty for US soldiers

Iran Tehran has announced a $30,000 bounty for the killing or capture of American soldiers.

Amir Hatami, the army chief, said the reward had been offered because of "the large number of requests", according to IRNA, the state news agency. Tehran has said that American soldiers must withdraw from the Middle East, one of its increasingly ambitious demands in exchange for reopening the Strait of Hormuz. President Trump threatened last week to declare the strait a "territory of the United States" once the war is over.

There are more than 50,000 American troops in the Middle East and 18 have so far been killed in the Iran war. As well as the risks of missiles and drones, Iran-backed militias operate in Iraq, suggesting Shia groups may attack US bases. The US has said it will withdraw its troops from Iraq by the end of September.

Hatami said: "Anyone who kills or captures and hands over an invading American military personnel will receive a reward equivalent to $30,000 ... Courageous Iranian women who carry out such an action will receive double the reward."

The Iranian parliament proposed this year a €50 million bounty for Trump. Trump was smuggled out of Turkey in a catering truck last month after the US received intelligence about someone carrying a shoulder-launched missile near the Nato summit in Ankara.

Wildfire kills two

Greece Two people believed to have been a couple died and several were injured yesterday as fast-moving wildfires swept across the island of Salamina, west of Athens, on the biggest holiday weekend of the summer. The fire department is evacuating the areas of Kolones and Saterli. The cause of the fires was not immediately known.

Olive oil industry crisis

Italy Olive oil producers have warned of a historic crisis in the industry as an estimated 200,000 tonnes remain unsold before the next harvest, driving prices into freefall and prompting calls for an urgent government intervention. The sector faces soaring production costs and pressure from cheaper rivals in Spain, Portugal and Tunisia.

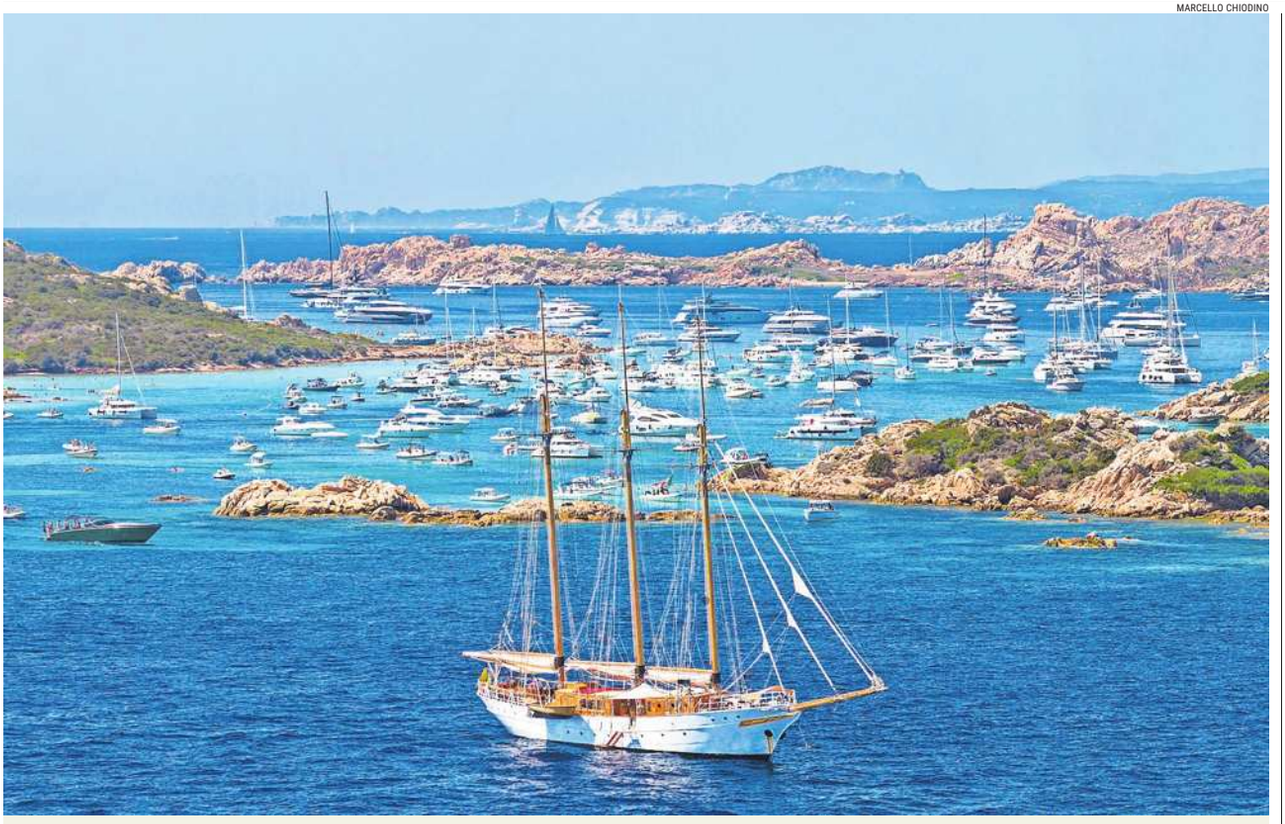
Giant statue unveiled

Poland A 55.6m statue of the Virgin Mary, believed to be the tallest of its kind in Europe, was inaugurated in the small central village of Konotopie on Saturday. Hundreds of people attended the celebration, in which helicopters scattered red roses over the crowd and traditional Polish music was performed. Fewer than 150 people live in Konotopie.

Car thieves thwarted

France Three teenagers who stole a car in Paris were caught after its owners activated a remote immobilisation system during their escape. The thieves had travelled about 50km south from the capital when they stopped at a toll booth on the A10 motorway, which leads to Bordeaux, and found they were unable to restart the Audi RS3.

MARCELLO CHIODINO



‘Locust’ party boats infest Sardinian islands

Surrounded by the sparkling turquoise Mediterranean, the Maddalena archipelago of nearly 60 pristine rocky islands carpeted in wild green shrubs should be paradise on earth (Alessio Perrone writes).

Environmental campaigners and the authorities have warned that the protected Maddalena National Park, off the northeast coast of Sardinia, is being overrun by boats after photographs emerged of the sea transformed into a “boat park” packed with moored dinghies and yachts whose anchors tear up the seabed.

“They come swarming in like locusts,” Rosanna Giudice, president of the Maddalena National Park, told *La Nuova Sardegna*, a regional daily. Although the park is thought to be able to accommodate up to 2,500 boats per day, she said, 6,500 have been seen in a single aerial survey.

Lino Cozzuto, head of Guardie Ambientali Sardegna, an environmental protection association, said: “These are the ways in which our coves are overrun with people.”

The crowds are attracted by the ease of boat rentals, made easier by apps, and the pristine waters, which have long lured the rich and powerful. Giorgia Meloni, the Italian prime minister, holidayed on the archipelago this month.

Up to 6,500 boats have been spotted in the Maddalena archipelago, where Giorgia Meloni holidayed this month

Italian law requires boats to anchor at least 200m from beaches and 100m from rocky shores but many go nearer, posing a threat to swimmers and the environment. Video has shown a karaoke party, with blaring speakers and microphone, on a boat anchored inside the protected area.

Cozzuto said the boats generated an “enormous amount of work” for the coastguard and that the park should introduce a cap and floating buoy fields for authorised anchoring.

In the spring, the park introduced restrictions and priority rules for access via the sea, but boat rental associations have decried the measures.

The park covers approximately 47,000 hectares, of which only 2,500 are on land. “You can’t deploy the army on the water,” Giudice told local media.

Thieves steal Messina’s masterpieces

Italy
Alessio Perrone

Four artworks by the Renaissance painter Antonello da Messina were stolen from the Museo Regionale di Messina in Sicily, depriving the painter’s native city of some of its only remaining artworks.

The thieves bypassed alarm and security systems on Saturday night to make off with three of the five surviving panels of the San Gregorio Polyptych, dated to 1473, as well as the double-sided panel depicting the Virgin Mary and the dead Christ in Pietà, which was removed from an armoured display case, LaPresse reported.

Two of the five panels were found abandoned outside the museum.

“We are devastated, this is a huge loss for the museum, for the city, the community and the art world,” the MuMe director Marisa Mercurio said, adding that the stolen works were “two of the most important and well-known” by the Messina-born artist.

Federico Basile, the mayor of Messina, called the theft “deeply reprehensible”, saying it was “even more painful” as it took place during traditional city celebrations on August 15.

According to the Italian news agency Adnkronos, the heist took when three thieves took advantage of a national holiday of Ferragosto, when much of Italy typically shuts down.

Messina’s councillor for culture Enzo Caruso called the heist “like something out of a film”, and said that thieves acted with professional precision. Caruso said the thieves will not be able to sell the panels easily.

Three of the surviving panels of the San Gregorio Polyptych were taken

Mont Blanc says non to free rescue

France
Adam Sage Paris

A row has broken out in the Alps after 32 mountaineers sought rescue only to be told to pay for a private helicopter.

Jean-Marc Peillex, the mayor of Saint-Gervais, at the foot of Mont Blanc, said that the mountaineers were “opportunists and dangerous people” and should never have tried the ascent in the first place after warnings over rockfalls.

They were defended by Charles Van der Elst, chairman of the French Federation of Alpine and Mountain Clubs, who said they had done nothing wrong and were being unfairly targeted.

The incident has caused heated debate in a country where mountain rescue operations have long been free.

Peillex said that climbers began the ascent despite warnings that rockfalls caused by droughts and heatwaves were making the Goûter route up Blanc dangerous.

He gave a statement urging mountaineers to avoid the ascent and shut down the Tête Rousse and Goûter mountain shelters to drive home his message.

The shelters were closed at 2pm on August 11. The next morning, the Goûter shelter warden called to say that 32 mountaineers who had begun their ascent before Peillex’s order had turned up. They learnt of the danger upon their arrival and wanted to be helicoptered to safety by state rescue teams.

Peillex refused to authorise the operation, saying that mountain guides had been warning about rockfalls for five days. He said: “They deliberately refused to listen to the messages ... recommending that people refrain from making the ascent or take into account the reality of the rockfalls, images of which were published on social media.

“It was therefore with full awareness that they climbed the Aiguille du Goûter, knowing that they would have to come back down.”

He said that the climbers, who are thought to have been of different nationalities, were in no immediate danger in the refuge and that conditions were safe for them to descend, if not to continue the ascent.

A group of climbers were told to pay for a helicopter down to avoid rockfalls

He instructed Chamonix Mont Blanc Hélicoptères, a local helicopter firm, to bring them down but said they would have to meet the cost of €95 per person.

A few balked at paying the fee and made the 600m descent on foot without injury, Peillex said. He urged the regional and national authorities to view the case as an example of “irresponsible people paying for their recklessness and risk taking”.

He said: “Everyone needs to understand that when the state pays for rescue operations, it is a blessed gift to insurance companies. It is time for this to end.”

Van der Elst said that Peillex’s account was misleading. “That is not what happened,” he told Le Dauphiné Libéré newspaper. He pointed out that the climbers were already heading up Mont Blanc when Peillex closed the shelters and said there had never been a formal ban on climbing the mountain, only a recommendation not to do so.

The climbers won support from mountaineering publications, which said it was reasonable for them to have asked to be taken down from the shelter by helicopter, given that officials were talking of a “lethal danger” from rockfalls.

In Switzerland, the bill for mountain rescue operations is met by those being rescued or, most often in practice, by their insurance companies. Similar rules apply in Austria. In Italy, regulations vary between regions, although rescue operations are mostly free unless victims are deemed to have committed gross negligence.

World

Trump praises Kim as he scales back drills

South Korea
George Grylls

President Trump has abruptly scaled back plans for joint military exercises with South Korea, saying they are too costly and threaten his "very good relationship" with Kim Jong-un.

He said North Korea had been "unthreatening and respectful" since he returned to the White House.

"Based on my very good relationship with Kim Jong Un, of North Korea, I am not happy with the fact that the United States has, long ago, agreed to participate in Joint Military Exercises with South Korea," Trump wrote on Truth Social.

"These exercises are not only costly, with much of these costs paid for by the United States of America (as usual!), but send a signal that is totally inappropriate and hostile, to a Country that, as long as Donald J. Trump has been President, has been unthreatening and respectful.

"Therefore, and based on the fact that it is too late to cancel, I have instructed Secretary of War, Pete Hegseth, to substantially reduce the Joint Military Exercises! While somewhat unrelated (?), I recently asked the President of South Korea if they would like to join us in the Denuclearization of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and they said, 'No thanks!' "

North Korea has responded aggressively to the annual Ulchi Freedom Shield military exercises, which are due to take place from today until August 27.

Pyongyang fired a short-range ballistic missile over the Sea of Japan this month and Seoul announced yesterday that South Korean troops had fired warning shots at North Koreans who had strayed across the military demarcation line between the countries.

The exercises, involving 18,000 South Korean troops, were supposed to test Seoul's ability to respond to North Korean drones, GPS disruption and cyberattacks.

The US has approximately 28,500 troops stationed in South Korea, although Trump has claimed there are 45,000 soldiers there.

Trump held three summits with Kim during his first term. On Saturday Trump wrote on Truth Social that he and Kim "get along GREAT!"

NOAH BERGER/AP

Eye of the beholder **The rescue pug Jinny Lu was named the world's ugliest dog at the Sonoma County Fair in California**

Welcome to the Three Choirs Festival, a delightful programme of choral and orchestral concerts, cathedral services, solo and chamber music recitals. It is the oldest non-competitive classical music festival in the world, having celebrated its 300th anniversary back in 2015. A handpicked selection of concerts at Worcester Cathedral offers inspiring experiences over our weekend itinerary, which also features a special tour of Chavenage House and a visit to Sudeley Castle, two of the Cotswolds' most beautiful honey-hued treasures.

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City of Gold is too broke to pay binmen

From our correspondent
KATE BARTLETT
JOHANNESBURG

A woman fetches water from an outdoor tap in Johannesburg, which is also facing shortages of electricity and neglected rubbish collections

It's been a chilly, dark and smelly week for exhausted Joburgers. As a winter cold front brought below-freezing temperatures and light snow to South Africa's biggest city, many were without electricity as the city's power utility battled high demand.

Many residents couldn't even warm up with a hot shower because the taps were dry. In the leafy suburb of Melville, there wasn't a drop for a week — except for the wealthier residents, who have gone off-grid and installed solar panels and water tanks, or drilled their own borehole.

More of those who can afford to are doing so as years of mismanagement, corruption and neglect push Africa's richest city to breaking point.

Now even rubbish collection is collapsing. Pikitup, the waste management company, is failing week after week, leaving pavements strewn with rubbish bags that spill open. Pikitup blames striking contractors, failing vehicles and a multimillion-rand debt to suppliers.

Although the latest electricity issues seem to have been a blip — the national "load-shedding" crisis has mostly been brought under control — the water problem is as bad as ever. Residents joke that if they have one of the three — water, electricity or rubbish collection — it's a good week.

Johannesburg loses about 45 per cent of its water through ageing or broken pipes, theft and leaks, costing the city billions of rand, and politicians seem clueless.

Panyaza Lesufi, premier of the Gauteng region, has said he also suffers from water problems, but that when his taps run dry he goes to a hotel to shower. He inspired an avalanche of Marie Antoinette-style "let them shower in hotels" memes.

In a city founded on an 1886 gold rush, and still the most prosperous in Africa by gross domestic product and private wealth, many find all this deeply ironic.

"In one week we had no water, delays in waste removal and some residents had no power. Shocking!" a member of a Melville community WhatsApp group wrote.

"It's not shocking," another replied. "Our city is bankrupt, our infrastructure is hanging on a thread ... [yet] most of the country sits unemployed, citizens don't believe in voting."

South Africa has some of the highest unemployment rates in the world, including about 60 per cent youth unemployment. However, it's not all bad news: the black middle class has expanded considerably, according to government statistics. The homicide rate has gone down, to 5,181 murders in the first quarter of 2026 — a 9.5 per cent decrease, though still among the highest crime rates in the world.

Johannesburg is the nation's most populous city, with about six million people, and its infrastructure — built to cater for the white minority during apartheid, when the black population were relegated to far-flung townships — hasn't kept up with urbanisation. The problems are exacerbated by bickering coalitions and mayors — the latest of whom, Dada Morero of the ruling African National Congress, has admitted the city has an infrastructure backlog of more than 220 billion rand (£10 billion).

Enoch Godongwana, the finance minister, said in April that the city owed more than 25 billion rand and had only 3.9 billion in cash. The auditor-general found billions in unauthorised and wasteful expenditure.

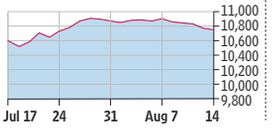
In November, mayoral candidates will fight for the task of running Johannesburg. So far, the candidate getting the most press is Helen Zille, 75, who led the Democratic Alliance — once South Africa's main opposition party but now in coalition government with the ANC — for years, and has also been mayor of Cape Town. Now she says she wants to put the shine back on the City of Gold.

Her viral campaign videos have shown Zille snorkeling in a huge, water-filled pothole and kayaking down a flooded road in Soweto. But Zille, and the voters of Johannesburg, know it will take a lot more than Instagram stunts to fix the city's rot.

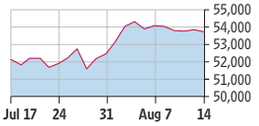
Business

WORLD MARKETS (Friday's close. Change on the week)

FTSE 100
10,750.11 (-150.98) ▼

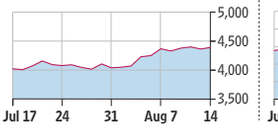


Dow Jones
53,732.41 (-304.52) ▼

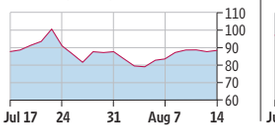


COMMODITIES

Gold
$4,389.76 (+17.87) ▲

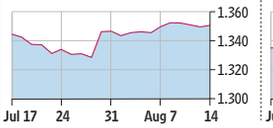


Brent crude (6pm)
$88.05 (+4.47) ▲

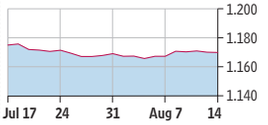


CURRENCIES

£/$
$1.3550 (+0.0054) ▲



£/€
€1.1698 (+0.0027) ▲



Rethink payroll tax increase and minimum wage changes, PM urged

Jack Barnett Economics Correspondent

Andy Burnham should partly reverse Rachel Reeves's £25 billion payroll tax increase and slow the equalisation of youth and average minimum wage rates to revive the UK's stagnant labour market, an employment group has said.

Experts at the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, the lobby group for the HR sector, called on the prime minister to consider the changes to ease the cost burden on businesses so they can push ahead with hiring plans as it said that employer confidence was close to "record lows".

Recruitment plans in the private sector have been stuck at their joint-lowest level since the Covid-19 crisis since spring last year, when the former chancellor's national insurance increase kicked in, the CIPD said.

James Cockett, senior labour market economist, at the group, said: "Our data suggests that the UK labour market has largely stopped moving. Hiring has weakened, but redundancy levels haven't risen, leaving us in a 'low-hire, low-fire' environment that's increasingly looking like a 'new normal'."

At her first budget in October 2024, Reeves raised the main rate of employer national insurance contributions (Nics) to 15 per cent and lowered the main earnings threshold that triggers the levy to £5,000 from £9,100, amounting to a £25 billion tax increase on businesses. Since this was announced, payroll employment has fallen sharply and businesses have retreated from hiring, especially in the case of lower-paid younger workers.

"To help get the jobs market moving again the government should consider reversing the reduction in the employer [national insurance] threshold which has made it harder for businesses to create the entry-level jobs young people need. It should also pause the further equalisation of the youth and adult national minimum wage rates," Cockett said.

A government spokesman said: "Our economy thrives when people have a wage they can count on, which is why we've raised the national living wage and national minimum wage, so the lowest-paid full-time workers are £900 better off. We continue to ensure generous employer Nics reliefs for hiring young people and apprentices, and by 2030-31 around 900,000 employers are expected to pay no employer Nics because of the increased employment allowance."

FCA warns banks over Ponzi scams

City watchdog alarmed by loan note scandals

James Hurley

The City regulator is scrutinising the role of high street banks in facilitating high-risk investment schemes which have put billions of pounds of consumers' money at risk, leaving thousands of people facing "devastating" losses.

The Financial Conduct Authority warned it would "act where firms have fallen short" as banks come under scrutiny over their role in receiving and processing funds on behalf of unregulated "loan note" schemes. A series of these businesses have collapsed amid claims they were huge Ponzi schemes.

The intervention follows an investigation by this newspaper which established that NatWest continued to process funds on behalf of a £250 million investment scheme even after its operators were arrested.

Lloyds Banking Group, Barclays and several other regulated firms are also facing questions over their relationship with unregulated loan note businesses.

The combined value of investors' exposure to these high-risk, and sometimes allegedly fraudulent, schemes is estimated to add up to several billion pounds. This month the FCA issued a warning that it was worried about the potential for unregulated firms "to facilitate financial crime" and told regulated firms such as banks to "do their due diligence and understand the business of firms they are dealing with".

The FCA is lining up a further intervention this week, The Times understands, about loan note schemes, which have been likened to an "epidemic".

NatWest is under pressure over its role as a receiving bank for 79th Group, a £250 million property investment scheme which failed last year and which is the subject of a City of London police investigation into "a suspected widespread fraud". Four people were arrested in February 2025 but NatWest continued to process funds for 79th until March 17, 2025. There had previously been warnings from other banks that 79th was a suspected scam. The scheme's operators, who have denied wrongdoing, have been bankrupted.

Lloyds is facing scrutiny over its role as receiving bank for the collapsed Godwin Capital scheme, which administrators have alleged was a £160 million Ponzi scam. Godwin's directors have had their assets frozen and are being sued for alleged fraudulent trading. A solicitor representing them was approached for comment.

Barclays was a receiving bank for Halcyon Developments Group, a loan note scheme for a 220-acre luxury golf and spa resort in the Limousin region of central France. The scheme has collapsed and its operator has been detained by the French authorities.

An FCA spokesman said: "We have warned repeatedly about unregulated firms selling loan notes, and we are looking closely at the role of regulated firms, including banks, where their services may have been used. We will act where firms have fallen short."

Lloyds declined to comment. NatWest and Barclays said they took their responsibilities to prevent financial crime seriously and had robust processes in place to tackle fraud.

Banks missed red flags, pages 30-31

GETTY IMAGES/DAVID LEVENSON

Closed book Maggie O'Farrell is among authors pleading for cuts in business rates to save small bookshops. Page 34

WH Smith boss in CCTV intrusion row

Alistair Osborne

The executive chairman of WH Smith has been accused of unlawfully training a camera on to a neighbour's home after a "bizarre" row over a burnt fence.

Leo Quinn, who was brought in to turn round the travel retailer after an accounting scandal, installed CCTV cameras at his Kimbers Farm equestrian centre near Windsor, in Berkshire, which he lets to a tenant who looks after polo ponies and other horses.

Chris Knight, his neighbour, claimed he was "breaking the law [with] intrusive surveillance" of his bungalow after failing to register the cameras as required by regulations. "He's installed high-definition cameras that can zoom right into our bedroom," Knight said.

He sent Quinn a letter last Monday, saying the cameras captured "footage beyond your boundary lines ... monitoring my private residence, garden and living spaces". He demanded Quinn remove or reposition the cameras and made a "subject access request" that he hand over all footage covering Knight's residence within 30 days.

Quinn, 69, said he had put in the cameras after "the neighbour burnt down the garden fence between the properties" a few months ago and "the police were called". He said the cameras were being used to monitor two wooden mobile horse shelters that he had put in a field close to Knight's property to protect them from the "brutal" heat.

"He's disputed that they need planning permission," said Quinn, adding that the cameras were there "in case anyone burnt them down too".

Knight, 63, a retired IT professional, said Quinn was exaggerating the impact of the "accidental" fire. "I put a few embers by the fence after a barbecue and it caught alight. It's all fixed now. The police didn't do anything." He said none of this excused Quinn for installing the cameras without registering Kimbers Farm as a "data controller" with the Information Commissioner's Office. He claimed Quinn was in breach of UK general data protection regulation.

Quinn was on business in America last week and said he had not yet seen the letter demanding he moved the cameras and had not received an email. "If he'd contacted the tenant or me, we'd have happily moved them. It's bizarre."

Need to know

1 The City regulator is scrutinising the role of high-street banks in facilitating high-risk investment schemes that have put at risk billions of pounds of consumers' money. Page 29

2 Andy Burnham should partly reverse Rachel Reeves's £25 billion payroll tax increase and slow the equalisation of youth and average minimum wage rates to revive the UK's stagnant labour market, an employment group has said. Page 29

3 The executive chairman of WH Smith has been accused of unlawfully training a camera on to a neighbour's home after a "bizarre" row over a burnt fence. Page 29

4 Twenty-five years since the opening of a second runway transformed the fortunes of Manchester airport, a key economics adviser to Andy Burnham has told the prime minister that further potential will be squandered if the government does not properly connect it to the northern rail network. Page 32

5 UK start-ups are "losing faith" in the government as a technology champion after successive efforts to drive procurement from domestic businesses have had little impact, a new report by the Startup Coalition, a lobby group for tech start-ups, claims. Page 33

6 After a tough time for craft brewers, the independents are bouncing back. A wave of closures is ending and new entrants are starting to serve drinks. Pages 34-35

7 The Eden Project, the Cornish tourist attraction, has said it has "stabilised" its loss of visitors since the pandemic, but still recorded a loss of £1.8 million in the year to March 2026. Page 35

8 Metalysis, a Rotherham-based manufacturer and technology company that produces solid-state metal and alloy powders for advanced industries such as aerospace, 3D printing and electronics, is looking to take on China's metal monopoly. Times Entrepreneurs Network, pages 36-37

"In the end it is really only through new ideas, technologies and discoveries that we progress

Paul Johnson, page 33

For expert business analysis subscribe to the business newsletter thetimes.com/newsletters

Banks missed red flags to

Investors have been hit hard by failure to spot loan note scams worth billions of pounds, writes **James Hurley**

Banks should be more mindful of the risk posed by unregulated firms to "facilitate financial crime", the City regulator warned last week.

A penny for the thoughts of NatWest when the Financial Conduct Authority issued the missive, which told regulated businesses to "do their due diligence and understand the business of firms they are dealing with".

The Times has established that NatWest continued to receive investor funds on behalf of an unregulated firm, now alleged by insolvency practitioners to have been a £250 million Ponzi scheme, for at least seven months after the regulator had referred the business to City of London police. The account in question kept receiving funds even after 79th Group's operators were arrested. These are among the more egregious of several apparent red flags or warnings about its client, 79th Group, a provider of property-based "loan note" investments, which NatWest appears to have missed.

It will be of little comfort to NatWest, and none to the regulator, that the bank is far from alone in facing scrutiny over its handling of similar loan note schemes, a subject causing increasing alarm at the FCA.

Consumers are estimated to have billions of pounds at risk across dozens of unregulated loan note schemes, which are risky investments advertising high returns often with unusual, weak or non-existent governance arrangements, which have at times exposed tens of thousands of people to life-changing losses.

The rise of the investments, marketed with supposed underlying assets ranging from property to litigation funding, gold, whisky, art and cryptocurrency, is already costing the banking sector large sums.

This is because under the so-called authorised push payment fraud rules, payment firms agree to repay UK victims of scams. Industry experts warn that the problems posed by loan notes to the banking sector is likely to get worse, as more loan note schemes collapse.

Lloyds and Barclays are among several high street lenders that have handled large sums from investors who backed failed loan notes, and the banks are now facing questions over whether they missed red flags.

Banks have a regulatory duty to counter the risk that they may be used to further financial crime. Lenders face strict "know your customer" and anti-money laundering rules; adherence requires due diligence, transaction monitoring and reporting of suspicious activity. In December 2021 NatWest was fined £265 million for a "catalogue" of money-laundering failures, including its handling of £264 million in cash from a jewellery business called Fowler Oldfield.

In what was the City regulator's first pursuit of criminal charges for money-laundering failures, the sentencing judge said the bank had been unwittingly "functionally vital" in laundering money. Its failings included missing several red flags, such as significant amounts of Scottish bank notes deposited throughout England, deposits of notes carrying a prominent "musty smell", and individuals acting suspiciously when depositing cash in NatWest branches.

The bank's dealings with 79th Group began shortly before this fine was levied. 79th attracted thousands of investors from the UK and overseas before collapsing into administration in April 2025, two months after City of London police announced an investigation into a "suspected widespread fraud" at the group, whose operators have denied wrongdoing.

Sir John Whittingdale, a Conservative MP and former minister, has said he was concerned that many of those affected by the failure were "unsophisticated, retired first-time investors [who] . . . put their savings into a well-planned scam".

79th ran into problems with its previous receiving bank, understood to be Santander, in 2020. It subsequently acquired a small business based in Southport, Merseyside, called Watever Developments. Watever had a longstanding relationship with NatWest; the bank has had a charge over the company since 2005, filings show. Watever, renamed 79th Grp Client, would go from having no employees or assets, according to its final set of accounts before the acquisition, to processing about £110 million from investors on behalf of 79th.

Only a few months after this acquisition was completed in 2021, 79th told prospective investors to ignore "false" warnings from banks that the returns it was advertising were "unachievable" or "fraudulent".

NatWest, which had become the main receiving bank for 79th, continued to process scheme funds despite these purported industry concerns.

Investors kept putting money into 79th. Transaction records seen by The Times appear to show that the 79th Grp Client account with NatWest was still receiving funds from individual investors as late as March 17, 2025.

This is despite the fact that the City regulator had alerted the police to its concerns about 79th at least several months earlier. City of London police, as the national lead force for white-collar fraud, agreed to investigate in September 2024 after a referral the previous month by the FCA. The account also remained active even after four people were arrested in relation to 79th in February 2025 in what police said at the time was an investigation into "suspected widespread fraud".

It is understood transaction records for the 79th Grp Client account show several apparent red flags, including a lack of evidence of normal trading activity and investor funds swiftly being sent to related party accounts. Administrators have identified more than 100 bank accounts linked to the group with "large sums of investor monies being transferred between" them.

NatWest declined to answer a series of questions. A spokesman said: "The bank will not make any comment on specific cases. However, NatWest actively works with industry, law enforcement and regulators to tackle financial crime and fraud, including investment fraud." The FCA declined to comment on whether it had informed NatWest about its concerns over 79th.

Lloyds Banking Group is also facing

MHA faces shareholder revolt over bonus schemes

Ben Martin Financial Editor

A London-listed accountancy firm has come under fire from two influential investor advisory groups over concerns bonus schemes for its top two executives could lead to "excessive payouts".

Both Institutional Shareholder Services and Glass Lewis have recommended that stock market investors in MHA oppose the company's remuneration policy at its annual meeting on Friday.

The criticisms from ISS and Glass Lewis could stoke a shareholder rebellion at what will be MHA's first annual meeting since the accountancy firm listed on London's junior Aim market in April last year. That initial public offering valued the company at £271 million and raised more than £60 million that was shared by current and retired partners of MHA, which is the UK and Ireland arm of the tax and accounting network Baker Tilly.

MHA's remuneration policy sets out how the business going forward will reward Rakesh Shaunak, who is its chief executive and was paid £821,364 in salary, profit shares and stock awards for the 12 months to the end of March, and Steve Moore, its finance chief, who received a £718,601 package.

ISS has told MHA shareholders it harbours worries about MHA's share award scheme, which is known in City parlance as a long-term incentive plan (LTIP) and is tied to the company's performance over three years. MHA's scheme is effectively uncapped, with the firm saying in its annual report that "no maximum opportunity has been set" for LTIP awards for Shaunak and Moore.

ISS said in a report to clients: "The absence of a cap on directors' awards raises several concerns about alignment with shareholder interests and overall remuneration best practices."

Glass Lewis also warned that the scheme has "no disclosed payout limits" and also raised concerns about the overall lack of detail given by MHA about both its LTIPs and its variable profit share scheme, another element in the executives' pay. It said there was "potential for excessive payouts".

When MHA listed last year, Shaunak was granted an LTIP that was then valued at £500,000 and Moore similarly received a £350,000 award and these are "subject to future vesting conditions based on earnings growth and total shareholder return", according to the annual report.

MHA said: "The LTIP was introduced specifically in connection with MHA's IPO and was only ever intended to apply to the CEO and CFO for a limited period following admission, to demonstrate alignment with new shareholders, rather than forming an ongoing part of MHA's remuneration framework. Any future arrangements for the senior executive team will include a limit on the number of awards that can be granted."

Businesses listed on Aim do not need to put their pay policies forward for investor approval. As a result, the investor vote on MHA's pay policy will be only advisory.

allow 'Ponzi fraud'

JAMES

Investments purportedly included a resort near a French château, trips in supercars were offered to promoters, and victims included Anne and Russell Chamberlain. Charles Smethurst, below left, was jailed

scrutiny for its dealings with a prominent loan note scheme. It was the receiving bank for about £160 million raised from investors by Godwin Capital, another alleged Ponzi scheme, in which about 2,500 investors are expected to recover only about 5p for every £1 they put in.

It is understood that an estimated £35 million of investors' money went to third-party promoters in allegedly undisclosed commission payments. Godwin's directors have had their assets frozen in a £155 million claim which alleges mismanagement, fraudulent trading and breach of fiduciary duty. The law firm representing them was approached for comment.

Godwin's relationship with Lloyds was used by promoters, and inaccurate information about the relationship was given to investors to suggest their money was safe. Third-party promoters who sold the scheme were encouraged with "incentives" including a four-day "supercar tour through Tuscany, Italy", with a McLaren 720S and a Lamborghini Huracán Performante Spyder among the cars on offer. Insolvency practitioners have established that Godwin had no assets beyond intercompany balances.

Anne Chamberlain and her husband, both in their late 70s, are among those counting the cost of an encounter with what the Financial Conduct Authority has called the "enticing" marketing of such investments. The retired Spain-based expats had saved more than £150,000 towards their future living and care costs. In July 2024 they invested this sum, their "entire life savings", into Godwin Capital.

Lloyds was also previously the British receiving bank for large sums raised by the £1.5 billion Dolphin Trust pan-European Ponzi scheme. Charles Smethurst, Dolphin's founder, was sentenced in Germany to six years in prison in 2025. He had previously served a prison sentence for fraud between 2000 and 2003. Lloyds declined to comment.

Barclays is another bank facing questions. It was a receiving bank for Halcyon Developments Group, a loan note scheme for a a 220-acre luxury golf and spa resort in the Limousin region in France. Robin Barrasford, a former British police officer and a director of Halcyon, was arrested in Spain in May at the request of the French authorities. He has been charged with alleged organised fraud and organised money laundering. The JIRS de Bordeaux, a financial crime unit overseeing the investigation in France, said last month that he was being kept under "judicial supervision".

Barclays declined to comment on the case but said it took its responsibility to prevent financial crime "extremely seriously". It added: "We have robust systems and controls in place to identify and investigate suspicious activity." The FCA said: "Too many people are being drawn into high-risk schemes with little protection and devastating consequences. We have warned repeatedly about unregulated firms selling loan notes, and we are looking closely at the role of regulated firms, including banks, where their services may have been used. We will act where firms have fallen short."

New contracts for firm in overcharging row

Mark Ludlow

The Australian travel company that ran the Bibby Stockholm asylum barge has repaid £43 million out of the £120 million that it overcharged UK government agencies, including the Home Office, according to new figures.

As doubts remain about the future of Corporate Travel Management — which has not traded on the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX) since August last year — The Times can reveal that the company has won 26 new contracts worth £420 million since the financial scandal emerged a year ago.

They include a new £170 million contract with the Ministry of Defence for its Afghan resettlement programme.

Figures compiled for The Times also show CTM has repaid a total of £42.8 million to public sector agencies it has overcharged. The largest was £32.8 million to the Welsh government, according to Tussell.

CTM, which is based in Brisbane, has now won £4.4 billion in public sector contracts in the UK over the past ten years. Ewen Crouch, CTM's chairman, has vowed to repay British clients all the monies owed as the company plans to release its audited financial results by the end of August before recommencing on the ASX.

A UK spokesman for the company would not comment on questions from The Times about how much money has so far been repaid to UK government agencies or when the repayment scheme would be complete.

A forensic audit by KPMG completed in April found the "erroneous billing" of UK clients was £40 million worse than originally thought and could now total up to £118 million, with overcharging largely linked to the provision of quarantine hotel rooms during the Covid-19 pandemic.

A spokesman for the Home Office said it had strengthened its contract management and had recouped more than £70 million from asylum accommodation contracts "which were not delivering good value for money".

A spokesman for the Ministry of Defence said it had not been overcharged by CTM in previous contracts.

The week ahead

Andy Burnham faces a stern test this week as a flurry of data will paint the clearest picture yet of how the economy has fared since he became prime minister nearly a month ago.

Tomorrow the Office for National Statistics will release figures with the rate of unemployment forecast to remain steady at 4.9 per cent in the three months to June with private sector pay growth close to a six-year low.

On Wednesday, the ONS is expected to publish data showing that inflation rose as high as 3 per cent on an annual basis in July from 2.6 per cent the previous month, pushed upwards by the introduction of the higher £1,862 Ofgem energy price cap.

Finally, on Friday, analysts expect the ONS figures to show a sharp fall in public sector borrowing, possibly to as low as £500 million in July, when the deficit usually narrows.

This would, however, mean that borrowing is about £4 billion higher in the first four months of the fiscal year compared with the Office for Budget Responsibility's latest forecast.

On the same day, the statistics agency is likely to report a slowdown in retail sales in July following the end of the World Cup in the month and the hot weather keeping consumers away from the high street.

Joblessness, inflation and borrowing data will be testing for Andy Burnham

TOMORROW

The world's biggest miner reports annual results for the 12 months to the end of June, marking the final year of Mike Henry's tenure as BHP chief executive. The results will be presented by his successor, Brandon Craig, who took over at the start of July. BHP hit production guidance for each of its core commodities — copper, iron ore and steelmaking coal — and it is expected to report full-year adjusted net income of $9.67 billion, up from $9.02 billion the previous financial year, according to analysts at Berenberg. "We think the company has the ability to return greater capital to shareholders in the form of a higher dividend," they said, predicting a final dividend of $1 per share.

Interims: Synectics
Finals: BHP
Economy: ONS UK monthly unemployment figures

WEDNESDAY

The half-year results from Oxford Nanopore will be the first under Francis Van Parys, below, who became chief executive in March and is set to outline his strategy for the FTSE 250 gene-sequencing company.

The shares have pared losses since they sold off in July, when Oxford Nanopore cautioned trading was below management and City expectations during the first half of the year. Chinese export controls and Middle East disruption weakened revenue growth. Oxford Nanopore reiterated its full-year topline forecasts then, when accounting for some "non-recurring" sales, and also its delayed break-even target for next year.

Analysts at Panmure Liberum said this month that the shares had rallied in anticipation of the strategic update but cautioned: "We believe the path to profitability could be temporarily delayed by strategic changes".

Interims: Ithaca Energy, Kenmare Resources, Oxford Nanopore Technologies
Economy: ONS monthly inflation figures, ONS producer prices, Federal Open Market Committee meeting minutes published

THURSDAY

There have been signs in the past couple of months that the global recruitment market, although still tough, is emerging from an unprecedented three-year downturn.

The full-year results from Hays will give investors an idea if the start of the recovery has properly begun or if it was just a short-term bounce. The stock market is betting it is the former, with Hays' shares having more than doubled in six weeks.

The company said last month it would deliver an annual pre-tax profit "at the top of the £37 million to £46 million range" forecast by analysts, although most of this reflects cost-cutting Hays has been doing, along with its peers.

There is no doubt Régis Schultz is under pressure to produce good news with this trading update from JD Sports Fashion. The chief executive has survived an attempt by former chairman Andy Higginson to oust him.

Investors now want evidence that his turnaround is working. In May, JD forecast adjusted pre-tax profits of £750 million to £850 million for the current financial year, compared with £852 million previously and a big decline from the £947 million reported in 2022.

Finals: Hays
Trading update: JD Sports Fashion
Economy: GfK UK Consumer Confidence Survey

FRIDAY

Interims: Hunting
Economy: ONS public sector finances, ONS monthly retail sales

Business

Rail link ‘is needed to give Manchester airport a lift’

Robert Lea Industrial Editor

A quarter of a century since the opening of a second runway transformed the fortunes of Manchester airport, a key economics adviser to Andy Burnham has told the prime minister that further potential will be squandered if the government does not properly connect it to the northern rail network.

Manchester has grown to become the UK’s third-largest airport — after Heathrow and Gatwick — and has become what Jim O’Neill, Lord O’Neill of Gatley, has called “the north’s only national airport”.

However, O’Neill has thrown down the gauntlet to Burnham, the former Manchester mayor and a long-time political ally, to enact the so-called Northern Powerhouse Rail, 12 years in the planning but barely off the drawing board.

In a report, *A Route to Growth in the North,* which examines the economic impact of Manchester airport’s expansion, O’Neill said Manchester airport’s hopes for further growth “needs to be matched by government investment in the transport links that connect the airport to the wider north”.

He said the corridors between Liverpool and Manchester to Leeds and Sheffield were “showing consistent signs of economic momentum yet the airport’s potential catchment remains beyond easy reach.

“Northern Powerhouse Rail is the mechanism that changes that, nearly trebling the airport’s public transport catchment and unlocking a broader route network in the process.

“If our new prime minister is to hit the target for UK growth, we need higher productivity overall and that means closing the north-south divide.

“International connectivity can make a meaningful contribution to that and in Greater Manchester’s case it already is. The missing piece is the railway that allows allows the rest of the north to share in those benefits.”

REUTERS/PHIL NOBLE

Lord O’Neill has urged Andy Burnham to enact the Northern Powerhouse Rail project to fulfil Manchester airport’s potential

Northern Powerhouse Rail has envisaged fast and frequent links between Liverpool and Manchester and on the trans-Pennine routes connecting northern cities to the east. Those ambitions withered during the Conservative governments.

It had also been expected that Northern Powerhouse Rail would be augmented by the HS2 high-speed rail link between Manchester and Birmingham but this was abandoned by the last Conservative administration.

O’Neill was one of the architects of the concept of the Northern Powerhouse — an economic strategy to close the wealth and opportunity gap between the north and south of England — when he served in the Conservative government more than a decade ago in the Treasury under George Osborne.

O’Neill’s intervention now is eye-catching, as he had been expected to join Burnham’s government as its top economics adviser. The relationship appears to have cooled and the job offer stalled over O’Neill’s opposition to Burnham’s partiality for introducing wealth taxes.

The Times reported this month that O’Neill, a former Goldman Sachs economist, had been offered significant ministerial and advisory roles but had yet to reach an agreement with No 10.

The Manchester airport model has been lauded for its co-ownership by Greater Manchester council and the city’s nine boroughs, which have enabled them to pursue a strategy of renaissance for the region hollowed out by the economic contractions of the 1980s.

The airport today flies to more than 200 destinations, comparable to the networks of Heathrow and Gatwick. It claims a £9.5 billion annual benefit for the region and helped to make the northwest the second-largest region for business creation outside London. Nearly 120,000 jobs locally are dependent on the airport.

Bev Craig, who succeeded Burnham as the Greater Manchester mayor, said: “Manchester airport has played a major role in our city-region’s reinvention. Now we need Northern Powerhouse Rail, including a high-speed station at the airport, to cut journey times, open up access to jobs and opportunities, and help unlock the north’s full potential.”

Landlords drive a hard bargain in falling market

Jack Barnett
Melissa York Assistant Property Editor

Average asking prices for newly listed homes have fallen in August at the fastest pace for nearly a decade, despite an uptick in demand in the property market since Andy Burnham became prime minister last month.

Data published by Rightmove, the property search site, showed that the average asking price for a home that is newly listed on its website dropped by 2 per cent this month to £364,999. Rightmove said it was the biggest price drop in August since 2018.

However, the search platform said that it had recorded a 5 per cent rise in buyer demand since Burnham succeeded Sir Keir Starmer as prime minister on July 20.

Asking prices in the north of England, which Burnham has promised to champion during his premiership, have risen by 1.5 per cent compared with last August, whereas they declined by 1.8 per cent in the south of England.

Mortgage rates rose to 5.09 per cent on average compared with 4.92 per cent in July, reflecting the inflationary effects of the continuing war in the Middle East, which has pushed up global government bond yields sharply.

Rightmove said that the number of homes listed on its site reached its highest level in 16 years, reflecting strained affordability preventing people from buying a property in the capital.

Colleen Babcock, a property expert at Rightmove, said: “Despite wage growth outperforming property price growth in recent years, an average home in London still costs around 17 times the national average annual wage.”

Separate research suggests that landlords are cashing in on the housing market setback, and more than half are demanding at least 10 per cent off the asking price of homes for sale. Figures from Hamptons, the estate agency, showed that buy-to-let investors were using their chain-free status and cash reserves to drive a hard bargain with struggling sellers. Landlords who bought last month secured an 11.3 per cent discount on average and 56 per cent of them had made an offer at least 10 per cent below the asking price.

The share of homes bought by landlords in Britain was up by nearly two percentage points this year, despite tougher renters’ rights and interest rates remaining higher than expected.

Rising costs hit mid-sized firms as Iran war continues

Jack Barnett Economics Correspondent

Higher costs and supply-chain disruption are poised to constrain the UK’s medium-sized businesses in the second half of the year, underlining the effect of the war in the Middle East on the UK economy.

Close to half of mid-sized companies are warning that a combination of supply-chain issues and higher energy costs will be their biggest challenge in the next six months, according to data published by BDO, the consultancy.

The findings, which were based on a survey of 500 medium-sized businesses with a turnover of between £10 million and £500 million, demonstrated that the war in the Middle East and the continuing effective shutdown of the Strait of Hormuz are on course to hamper UK growth for most of 2026.

The Iran war began at the end of February and little progress has been made towards a lasting peace agreement, causing prolonged disruption to global shipping.

As much as a quarter of global seaborne oil shipments usually flow through the strait, along with most of the liquefied natural gas from the Middle East.

Richard Austin, a partner at BDO, said: “Many firms are taking positive steps, but they are also forced to continue to make difficult decisions around investment and pricing. Increasingly, we’re seeing firms focus on efficiency, resilience and reducing their exposure to external shocks.”

Richard Austin, of BDO, said firms were focusing on ‘efficiency and resilience’

Oil prices have traded at about $80 to $100 a barrel for several months, while European gas prices have been pushed sharply higher as a result of fighting in the Middle East.

BDO’s data also illustrated that businesses were changing their behaviour in order to minimise their exposure to the negative effects of the Gulf conflict.

A total of 35 per cent told the consultancy that they intended to lower their energy consumption and a further 41 per cent planned to increase investment in low-carbon technologies.

BDO also said that the sectors that had been hit the hardest by supply-chain disruption and higher costs were manufacturing, construction, leisure and hospitality.

Data released this week is forecast to show that inflation increased to almost 3 per cent on an annual basis in July from 2.6 per cent in the previous month, owing to a rise of 13 per cent in the Ofgem energy price cap. The rise covers the period from July 1 to September 30.

The Bank of England believes that UK inflation will remain well above its 2 per cent target for the remainder of the year.

The central bank has said that inflation could exceed 4 per cent if there is a further escalation in the Gulf war that pushes oil prices back above $100 a barrel over a sustained period, which would necessitate interest rate increases.

Paul Johnson

The abolition of the government department responsible for driving ideas may prove costly

A fair bit has changed since my last column on these pages six weeks ago. A new prime minister and all that. A fair bit has changed for me too. Reader, the reason for my absence is that I got married, and have been away on honeymoon. A lovely time in British Columbia, since you ask.

I'll leave it to The Times's travel writers to extol the virtues of the west coast of Canada. I mention it because, old romantic that I am, I spent some of that time catching up on my economics reading. In particular, a wonderful book, *Growth: A Reckoning*, by Daniel Susskind. Our new chancellor should read it; once he's read and digested my own recent volumes, of course.

Susskind takes us through the somewhat chequered history of economic thinking about growth. He reiterates how vital economic growth is to human flourishing, and tackles head on some of the trade-offs that need to be addressed.

Here, though, I want to focus on another of the book's central insights: that growth depends, more than anything, on new ideas. Yes, it is important to optimise the planning regime, the tax system, national infrastructure, the competition regime, and so on. But, while I would lay more emphasis on these in the UK context than does Mr Susskind, in the end it is really only through new ideas, technologies and discoveries, that we progress. He is right that, relative to those other more mundane issues, the role of new ideas and discoveries often gets less attention than it deserves.

That is a little surprising, given that these are among the central insights of some of the most recent work in economics, including that of Joel Mokyr and Philippe Aghion, the 2025 winners of the economics Nobel. Their work demonstrates how new discoveries, and their diffusion through the economy, drive growth, not least through "creative destruction" as new technologies and more efficient firms push out the old.

What was the Industrial Revolution, after all, if not the discovery and rolling out of new and more efficient ways of doing things, at the expense of the old? That, alongside massively expanding the range of what is doable, or even imaginable has, quite obviously, been what has driven economic development, growing living standards and rising life expectancy ever since.

ALAMY

A loss of funding threatens the future of the Lovell Telescope at Jodrell Bank

This focus on ideas is, incidentally, the best riposte to the doom mongers who rail against growth, and claim that we have reached its limits. Appropriately guided, it helps solve our biggest environmental and other challenges. Progress on reducing greenhouse gas emissions has been inadequate. But it has also been remarkable as technological developments have increased the efficiency of renewable energy, electric cars and the like at an astounding rate.

The rate of innovation through Covid was even more extraordinary — both the development of the vaccines and the innovations in ways of working. These are both lessons in what is possible given appropriate incentives and enough urgency.

There is an obvious implication here for governments wanting more growth: more research, more incentives for research, more funding for research. Yet total government funding aimed at research and development (R&D) is well under 1 per cent of national income.

The main funder of research in universities, UK Research and Innovation, is currently cutting programmes in basic science including physics, and is threatening the end of the Jodrell Bank telescope. As a nation we spend, public and private, about the OECD average on R&D, but are way behind international leaders.

And it is slightly hard to fathom why the first and biggest actual change to the machinery of government announced by the new prime minister was not the creation of "No 10 north" but the abolition of the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT). Its responsibilities have been scattered between the business department, the Cabinet Office and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. In the words of the Institute for Government, the creation of DSIT in 2023, unusually for a machinery of government change, was "thought through and had clear logic". They are less kind about its abolition: a "mistake" creating a loss of focus. It comes with a risk that "confusion will reign and . . . will lead to real harm to an area where the UK had been making progress".

In a dynamic economy, though, it is not only the creation of new knowledge that matters, but its diffusion. Philippe Aghion's Nobel lecture shows how recent stagnation has been driven in part by increased use of patents to prevent this diffusion of new ideas. This, in the US at least, has been accompanied by increased mark-ups and rents among "superstar" firms which hoard knowledge in order to stifle competition. The creative destruction necessary for growth is hampered.

Of course, some degree of protection of intellectual property is necessary to encourage its creation. But it looks like that protection has gone too far. In Susskind's words, intellectual property has been "weaponised" by firms registering ever more patents in a deliberate, and often successful, strategy to shut out potential competitors. Added to outdated (pre-internet) international frameworks and the gradual extension of patenting into an ever-expanding range of human activities, alongside effective extensions to copyrights and patents, and the positive effects of knowledge creation are dampened.

There are three big lessons here. First, we need more focus on the quantum of research and knowledge creation, both public and private, within the economy.

Second, we need to ensure that money we do spend is well directed, and as productive as possible. Third, barriers to diffusion of ideas need to be lowered. Let's hope that the decision to abolish the government department tasked with oversight of these issues does not prove to be one taken in haste and repented at leisure.

Paul Johnson is provost of The Queen's College, Oxford, and a senior adviser at Frontier Economics

Start-ups 'losing faith' in pledge to Buy British

Chris Dorrell

UK start-ups are "losing faith" in the government as a technology champion after successive efforts to encourage procurement from domestic businesses have had little effect, a report claims.

The Startup Coalition, a lobby group for tech start-ups, said Andy Burnham's latest "Buy British" push needed to address fundamental problems with procurement process to truly support the sector. "For British start-ups and scale-ups, this really is the last-chance saloon after successive administrations have delivered warm words but little real action. The result is an ecosystem increasingly losing faith in the UK government as a buyer and champion," the group said.

Successive governments over the past decade have struggled to increase the share of government spending that goes to small businesses.

In 2015 David Cameron set a target for one third of central government procurement to go to small and medium-sized enterprises by 2020. The latest estimates from Tussell and the British Chambers of Commerce suggest that 21 per cent went to SMEs last year, a six-year high.

Looking at the technology sector specifically, Tussell found that 84 per cent of UK government tech spending last year went to only 150 businesses, of which the majority were foreign.

In his first speech as prime minister, Burnham said he would "use public procurement to back British industry". In sectors such as technology, defence and artificial intelligence, John Healey said the government would "buy British not if possible, but by design".

The government has already made changes to the public procurement process, particularly the "social value" rules which were used to assess bidders. The Cabinet Office has doubled the credit given to companies bidding for contracts that provide "social value" through local employment.

The Startup Coalition said early changes on social value could "mark a potential turning tide", but warned that ministers would need to reshape the procurement process fundamentally. Warm words from the top would not be enough to turn "a tanker that is inert, risk-averse and slow to seize new opportunities".

The government said it had made changes that would "cut red tape and ensure that every business focuses on delivering British jobs".

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Business

Cheers: A glass half-full for new wave of craft brewers

After a difficult time for the industry the independents are bouncing back, writes **Jessica Newman**

An inheritance can offer all sorts of opportunities. For Greg Mizon, it offered the chance to pursue what he had been dreaming of for years.

Mizon is in the process of transforming a former farm shop and butchers at Lockey Farm in Arborfield Cross, Berkshire, into what will be the home of Big Fella Brewing.

Come October, his plans are to debut a line-up of self-made beers specialising in New England-style ales alongside a taproom — an industrial-style space a few yards away from the brewery where customers can buy and drink its beer.

It is a bold leap for Mizon, 39, who first began home brewing about a decade ago when he was fitting his hobby around a job in corporate sales. A family inheritance, along with investment from Alex Rowley, a business partner who runs a beer shop and café nearby, allowed him to get off the ground.

"There's much smarter ways I could have invested my money I'm sure, but I just didn't want to get down the line and wonder 'what if'," he says. "It was a chance for me to follow my dreams."

Mizon is embarking on his ambitious venture at a delicate moment for the industry. Figures from the Society of Independent Brewers and Associates (Siba) released last week suggest a crisis which has been choking Britain's independent brewers is beginning to stabilise.

The UK's brewing landscape has undergone a seismic shift over the past few decades. What started as a scattered pursuit of home brewing evolved into an industry-changing phenomenon as hundreds of small-scale entrepreneurs flocked to the scene. About ten years ago the craft beer movement reached fever pitch, pushing the number of breweries higher than 2,000 for the first time since the 1930s.

This new wave of innovative brewers did not go unnoticed by the global giants. AB InBev, the Stella Artois owner, gobbled up what was then a five-year old Camden Town Brewery for £85 million in December 2015. Three years later, Heineken acquired a stake in Tottenham's Beavertown Brewery, founded in 2011 by Logan Plant, the son of the rock star Robert Plant, completing its acquisition in 2022.

However, the industry has gone through a painful correction in recent years, and the number of independent brewers fell to about 1,550. As in many other sectors, brewers' balance sheets were spoiled by the pandemic and its forced closures, which some never recovered from. Those that survived have had to battle to absorb cost inflation from energy, beer and employment costs, as well as changing consumer habits.

"Like the rest of hospitality, we have suffocating levels of taxation in the brewing sector," Andy Slee, Siba's chief executive, says. "Our beer duty rate is

Greg Mizon, left, and Alex Rowley are

1,000 per cent of that in Germany, which takes their brewing industry very seriously, while here the sector has historically been viewed as a bit of a cash cow."

Breweries in the UK pour billions into the economy every year.

According to a report by the British Beer and Pub Association in 2024, breweries generated £5.7 billion in gross added value to GDP in 2022, supporting about 85,000 jobs.

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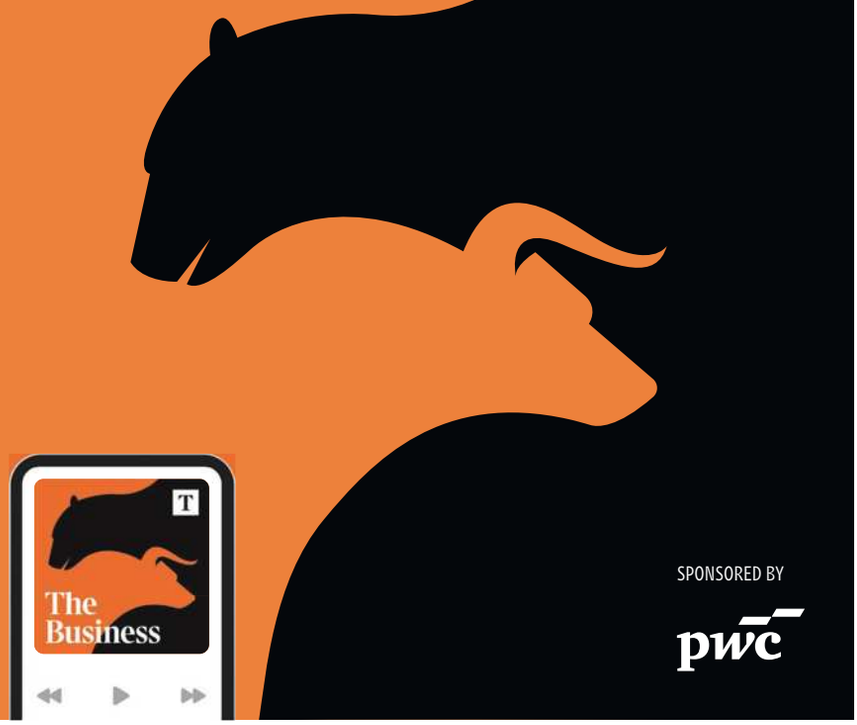

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THE TIMES THE SUNDAY TIMES

Small bookshops plead for same rates relief as pubs

Mark Ludlow

High-profile authors and the book industry have called on Andy Burnham to extend business tax relief offered to pubs and live music venues to independent bookshops or risk more of them going bust.

Maggie O'Farrell, the author of *Hamnet*, and Patrice Lawrence, the children's laureate, are among those who told the prime minister that "bookshops do more than just sell books" but are also a key part of local communities.

"They make a unique contribution not only to local communities but also to Britain's literary culture and creative economy," a letter, organised by the Booksellers Association, said.

Other authors to put their weight behind the campaign — which was also signed by 233 booksellers across the UK — include Sir Philip Pullman, Adam Kay and Florence Knapp.

Economic analysis commissioned by the Booksellers Association found that independent bookshops in England, which are not eligible for full small business rates relief, face annual increases of £4,563 by 2029-30. The bills will double for some once transitional relief ends.

The analysis found that business rate bills are projected to rise by 45 per cent across the sector. For the average independent bookshop that means selling an additional 1,141 books every year simply to cover the increase.

Eighty-five per cent of bookshops say they are less likely to invest in stock, staffing, events or their premises as a result of business rates changes.

Burnham said last week that he wanted to save Britain's "hollowed-out high streets" with a crackdown on vape and betting shops. Meryl Halls, managing director of the Booksellers Association, which represents most British bookshops, said they welcomed Burn-

JULIAN BENJAMIN FOR THE TIMES; GETTY IMAGES

opening Big Fella Brewing on a farm in Berkshire, while Camden Town Brewery prepares stock for pubs, top right, as a crisis in the sector begins to stabilise

After years of difficulties for the sector, there are glimmers of hope. The net number of independent breweries that shut their doors for good in the first six months of 2026 totalled 16, Siba's figures show, which compares with a much higher pace of three closures a week throughout last year.

Still, Slee believes the numbers are "less bad, not good". While businesses who have managed to weather the storm are seeing strong demand for independent beer, he argues that profitability is still a big concern.

One of the toughest challenges that small, independent brewers face is finding somewhere to sell their products. About half of Britain's pubs are either owned by breweries or "tied" to big pub companies, meaning that tenants are contractually obliged to buy certain supplies from their pubco landlord, which tightly controls which third parties can get into their pubs.

"Getting beers on the bar is tougher than ever, with brewers on average not able to access 62 per cent of the pubs in their local market," Slee says. "Independent beer offers quality, variety and a range of styles and flavours simply — but bars are dominated by a handful of mega brands."

It is a challenge that Big Fella Brewery is very aware of.

While Mizon doesn't have grand aims to sell his beer everywhere, rather "to the right places that have people who are passionate about drinking local independent beer", he believes opening up a taproom is essential as it will provide the business with a direct relationship to customers. Another route to the market will be through "bottle shops" selling its beer in cities such as Manchester, Preston and London, he says.

Wylam Brewery, known for its Jakehead and Hickey the Rake beers, is arguably one of the biggest success stories in modern British brewing.

The brewery has come a long way since it was established in 2000 by John Boyle and Robin Leighton on a farm in Heddon-on-the-Wall, Northumberland. It became much more than a production facility when it moved into the Palace of Arts in Newcastle's Exhibition Park in 2016, evolving into a tripartite operation comprising the brewery, a gig venue and event space and a vibrant taproom.

Vaulkhard Group, a local family business that owns a dozen or so pubs in the northeast, took over Wylam three and a half years ago.

Leveraging its experience running pubs ensures Wylam can stay ahead of the consumer's changing appetites, according to Harry Vaulkhard, its director. Noting industry trends, such as rise in popularity of fruity lagers such as Jubel and resurgence of "nitro" stouts including Guinness and Murphy's, Wylam has successfully pivoted its line-up to keep up.

"It's about finding something which you can sell easily enough but you've got a bit of a niche on it as well," he explains.

One of the most high-profile casualties in the past couple of years was Wolverhampton's 150-year-old Banks's Brewery, which was closed by its owner, the Carlsberg Marston's Brewing Company, a joint venture between Carlsberg UK and Marston's PLC, in September 2025.

Pete Atwal, however, refused to take this lying down. Born and raised in the city, Atwal was saddened to watch Wolverhampton's brewing heritage vanish and was inspired to find a way to preserve the industry's legacy.

Springbanks Brewery was launched earlier this year; its name a deliberate homage to Banks's as well as the historic Springfield Brewery, which closed in 1991.

Opening Springbanks proved to be a bit of a baptism of fire for Atwal who, despite being an experienced entrepreneur, does not have a background in brewing. He cites "astronomical" energy costs and rising ingredient prices as primary headwinds, yet he sees his glass half-full thanks to strong local support.

Many local pubs that used to stock Banks's beers "are crying out for our beer", he says, but the tied agreements are a frustrating hurdle.

Whether it's through diversifying into community-focused venues such as Wylam and Big Fella, or relying on deep-rooted loyalty such as Springbanks, the new generation of brewers is learning that success requires more than just a great recipe.

Eden Project 'halts pattern of decline' but still in red

Mark Ludlow

The Eden Project has "stabilised" its loss of visitors since the pandemic but still recorded a loss of £1.8 million in the year to March.

The Cornish tourist attraction recorded a slight increase in visitors last financial year to about 545,000 people but that is still only about half of the million people who used to visit the West Country eco park in 2019.

The latest accounts showed Eden Project Ltd, the commercial subsidiary of the charity that owns the project, recorded a total loss of £1.8 million in 2026, down from the loss of £3.75 million in 2025. Revenue edged down to £22.8 million in the year to March 2026, from £23.1 million the previous year.

Visitor numbers to the Eden Project were up marginally by 0.4 per cent "reflecting improved consistency in trading performance, despite continued external pressures", the company said.

Orna Ní Chionna, the chair of the trustees who run the Eden Project, said the improved financial performance was due to a "necessary reset" for the registered charity.

"Like many organisations, the Eden Project has faced a difficult external environment, triggering the need to reset its cost base and adapt to significant changes in leadership and structure," she said. "The impact of the restructuring programme, which was implemented at the end of the previous financial year, has been felt throughout this year as teams have adapted to a new operating model."

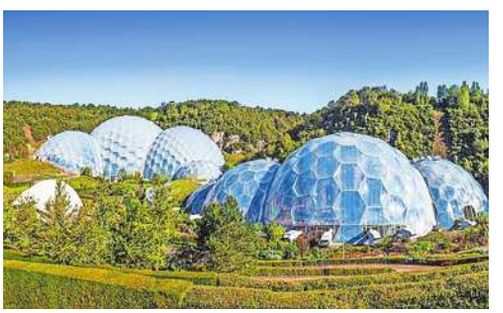
The company said it had ended its most recent financial year "having halted the pattern of decline seen in prior years, marking an important inflection point".

The Eden Project, built on an old clay pit just outside Par, Cornwall, opened in 2001. It is most famous for the giant domes that house thousands of plant species and which were designed by Sir Nicholas Grimshaw, who died last year.

In response to the drop-off in visitors, at the start of 2025 the business undertook a "major restructuring" which led to the loss of 75 jobs — about a fifth of its workforce. A spokesman said at the time it had been a "very difficult process" but one that was "essential" to ensure the attraction's long term future.

Staff numbers were reduced from 344 in 2025 to 316 in 2026, which helped to reduce its wages and salaries from £12.2 million in 2025 to £10.2 million. Administrative expenses have also been trimmed from £15.5 million to £13.1 million.

Andrew Jasper, chief executive of the Eden Project, which recently celebrated its 25th anniversary, said the overhaul included a reset of the brand to "sharpen and reaffirm what Eden stands for: wonder, nature, education and hope".



The Cornwall attraction recorded a 0.4 per cent rise in visitors to 545,000 but that was still half the annual amount registered before the pandemic

ham's pledge to revitalise high streets, but bookshops needed to be included in cuts to business taxes.

"We have been fighting this battle for a long time and we know the community value and cultural value of bookshops is similar to what pubs bring," she told The Times. "We may not be as front of mind for consumers possibly, but for certain consumers they are, but what they do is so broad they are often underrated." Halls said there was a "long painful dawning" for many small businesses, including booksellers, once their rates were revalued.

Kay, the Bafta-winning author of the memoir, *This Is Going to Hurt*, said: "It was really welcome news that the government will be supporting pubs and live music venues — all hugely important parts of our communities. But bookshops are too, and right now they need the same helping hand," he said.

Pullman, author of the trilogy *His Dark Materials*, said high streets without a local bookshop "will become a poor and colder place".

Burnham has suggested the government will go "further" on business rates, raising hopes that more action would be taken in the budget in October.

Rotherham plant takes on China's metal monopoly

THE TIMES ENTREPRENEURS NETWORK MANUFACTURING

Metalysis is preparing to scale production of metals for rockets and advanced electronics, writes **Richard Tyler**

C-103 might sound like the niece of C-3PO from *Star Wars* but it promises to do more than talk a good game.

It is a metal alloy that is highly resistant to heat and is vital for space and hypersonic rockets, as well as satellites. There is a global shortage and now, for the first time, it can be produced to the necessary specification in Rotherham. "You have to wait two years before you can get it, is what we are hearing," says Nitesh Shah, the chief executive of the company called Metalysis that is behind it. He expects to have capacity to make 15 tonnes a year from the start of 2027.

Metalysis is setting itself up to help western supply chains wean themselves off relying on Chinese processors for their critical minerals.

It is already able to produce commercial quantities of high-concentration aluminum-scandium that's used in the production of silicon chips. Next up is tantalum, for use in capacitors in consumer electronics, and it is also able to create tanbium for jet engines and space rockets, as well as the niobium-hafnium-titanium alloy known as C-103.

These metals are all in short supply since China imposed controls on their export last year and Russia ceased being a viable source after its invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Even if the metals are acquired from non-Chinese sources, they are often still sent to China for processing because it controls the majority of the production capacity.

Metalysis is offering itself up as an alternative. Rather than melt metals together at high temperatures to create alloys, the company uses a patented electrolysis process developed at Cambridge University in the late 1990s that reduces metal oxides into the desired metal powders in a molten salt. The process significantly reduces the capital and energy cost of producing the metals. As the feedstocks are oxides rather than metals, they can be sourced from more reliable countries.

The process also has the merit of making oxygen as a by-product. The latter has piqued the interests of space agencies in the UK and Europe. They have commissioned Metalysis to find a way to mine lunar regolith for oxygen to support permanent settlements on the moon.

Other interested parties include John Healey, because one of Metalysis's two facilities on the edges of Rotherham is located in the chancellor's constituency. In March he described Metalysis as "a world-leading innovator".

The 25-year-old company has experienced false dawns before but in 2026 could Metalysis's moment finally have arrived? Shah thinks so. He points to the broad "acceptance" that critical minerals play an important role in supply chains.

"When you realise China are not your friend any more, it is a case of, 'where do we go?'" he says. "We are one of the very few mid-stream players. There has been a lot of focus on the mining industry [as the source of critical minerals], but lately people are realising that once you have made an oxide you still have to send it to China. People like us break the chain to China. They can come to us, we make the powders, totally avoiding China and Russia."

Shah can see small volume orders starting to snowball. He says: "I'd be disappointed if we don't have £10 million [in revenues] next year."

It's a windy day when I arrive in Rotherham, navigating the tight streets of the 150-acre Advanced Manufacturing Park where there isn't enough room on the roads for the cars and lorries to pass each other safely. A giant wind turbine that sits at the centre of the park, overlooking plants run by Boeing, McClaren and Rolls-Royce, is gradually stirring. The

Nitesh Shah, head of Metalysis, at the

A scientist inspects aluminium-scandium, which is used to make silicon chips

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CURRENT ACCOUNT SWITCH GUARANTEE

MARK NAFTALIN FOR THE TIMES

company's production plant in Rotherham, where it produces speciality metals that are in short supply in the West

movement is something of an "event" according to Ian Mellor, Metalysis's managing director, hinting it doesn't turn very often.

While the turbine may be having one of its off days, Metalysis's 20,000 sq ft plant on the park appears to be living up to its promise. Inside, its solid state cells are working away, producing specialty metals.

The know-how that Metalysis is commercialising dates back to a breakthrough in solid-state electrolysis techniques in 1997 at the University of Cambridge by George Chen, Derek Fray and Thomas Farthing. The process is energy efficient and produces a level of purity in the alloy, and performance, that others struggle to replicate, the company claims. For instance, its aluminium-scandium is 36 per cent concentrated, versus between 0.5 per cent and 1.5 per cent typical elsewhere, says Shah. This opens up new applications in advanced electronics when, by March next year, Shah expects Metalysis to be producing 50 to 100kg of the alloy powder a month. It will sell for thousands of pounds a kilogram.

It has other metals ready to be produced at the correct specification. Tanbium is earmarked for the Scottish rocket company Skyrora, but most the company's target customers are overseas. Shah says while the focus is on expanding production in Rotherham, he expects that "within the next two years" they will have a unit producing tantalum in the US.

The company's output at present is small. It has made one tonne of powder in the last 12 months and has the capacity to produce between 12 and 25 tonnes a year, depending on the density of the metals it makes. "If you are looking at things like steel and iron ore, that is nothing, but when you are talking about speciality products like ours that is a very substantial capacity," he says.

Since its incorporation in 2001, there has been a steady stream of notable names beating a path to see the company. Early investors included Ikea; the mining giant BHP Billiton; 3i, the private equity company; and ETF Partners, a European sustainable venture capital firm. More recently, Iluka Resources, the Australian mining group, took a 29 per cent stake as part of the £20 million fundraising round that also involved the one-time star fund manager Neil Woodford investing.

However, since 2019 Metalysis has been majority owned by Canada's Reimer Group, which took control for $2.5 million after it placed itself into administration, having failed to raise the additional capital it required to keep trading. Just 10 staff out of the 59 kept their jobs. Today Metalysis is back to 50 staff and expects to double that figure by next year.

As production ramps up, Shah is sounding out new investors to support the expansion. Its fourth-generation cells, capable of producing between 10 and 20 tonnes a year, cost roughly £10 million to commission and he wants at least one to meet demand in the short term. "To scale up now, we need anything from £10 million upwards," he says.

Metalysis has held talks with the British Business Bank, the government's economic development agency, and the National Wealth Fund in the past, but Shah says they have not led anywhere yet.

"The problem is when you talk to the British Business Bank they all love the technology and understand the sectors we are in, but they are too risk-averse," he says. "It is, 'Come and talk to us when you have revenues'. Well, by the time I have revenues I will not need you. I need help now to scale up. I have the technology: in terms of the TRL [technology readiness level] it is an eight, nine. I have products that I have customers for. I just need help to scale up. That has been the challenge."

Metalysis's majority owner has invested $50 million in equipment, people and product development, but it has now reached its limit. The investment takes the total sunk into the technology since it was spun out of Cambridge to close to $200 million.

The Department for Business, Innovation, Science and Trade has recognised Metalysis's potential, including in its critical minerals strategy. Shah sees a change of language in government, under the Burnham regime, about state support in the north of England as a positive step.

"The fact that the government is now talking about supporting businesses like ours, hopefully should help. We need to scale up now," says Shah.

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Why we should dump Gen Z and boomer labels

Alex Wright

More than 2,000 years ago, Plato complained that new generations were lazy and had no respect for authority. Today, you can see the same argument across social media, except now we have handy labels to use — Gen Z, Millennials, Gen X, Boomers. Entire theories have been built around what each group want, how they behave and what makes them different to each other.

The problem is that these generations don't exist. At least, not in the way you might think. And, if you're running a business, that matters to you.

People born in different eras experience different things. If you enter the workplace after a global pandemic and alongside the rise of AI, you will inevitably have a different perspective from someone who started their career decades earlier.

But after more than ten years spent building Dash, I can tell you that a birth year reveals remarkably little about someone's ambition, attitude or ability to contribute to the cause. As someone who has spoken openly about dyslexia and neurodiversity, I have seen first-hand how easy it is to reduce people to a single characteristic. A label might tell you something about someone, but it will never tell you everything.

> A birth year reveals very little about someone's ambition or attitude

A person's perspective is shaped by far more than when they were born. Their upbringing, education, family circumstances, personality, culture, interests and experiences all play a role. No one in their right mind really believes that a colleague will have completely different views of work, risk, ambition and success by virtue of being a year or two younger than them.

I'd say it follows that the best teams are built by taking time to understand the individuals in front of you: what motivates them, where they excel, what experiences have shaped them and what they need to do their best work. And that the best leaders enable people to feel confident enough to challenge assumptions and ask difficult questions, no matter what label the marketers and academics want to stick on them.

For founders, that doesn't mean you should turn every decision into a debate or expect everyone to agree with every choice. Businesses need direction. Someone has to make the final call and know that the team will sometimes just have to knuckle down. But understanding your team goes hand in hand with effective leadership. Some of the most valuable conversations we have had at Dash have come from colleagues questioning whether our actions genuinely match our stated values, such as highlighting where our supply chain still contained shrink-wrapped packaging, and how we could cut it back.

Now, I'm not saying there aren't some differences between team-mates, which do seem to split down generational lines. One is work-life balance. For a long time, business culture equated sacrifice with dedication. Late nights, long hours and constant availability became signs that someone was "committed". Today younger employees are more willing to question that assumption.

There will always be moments in business when extraordinary effort is required. When you are launching a product, solving a crisis or trying to secure the future of the company, everyone must step up. Working hard to align a team around a clear purpose, as Dash has, means we can ask for more when the chips are down, to help the company achieve its goals and beat competitors that don't have that advantage.

Yet the challenge from younger colleagues has helped us distinguish between those critical moments and business as usual. It has pushed us to build a culture where people can perform at their best for the long term.

AI is another example where generational assumptions can be misleading. There is a common narrative that younger employees automatically embrace new technology, while older generations struggle to adapt. That wasn't our experience.

The conversations we have had about AI have not simply been about whether a tool can make us faster or more efficient. They have also raised the fact that AI tools use a significant amount of energy, and asked if that reflects our values as a B-Corp-accredited business. In short, are we using new technology to help build the kind of company we want to become?

The future belongs to businesses that embrace a genuinely diverse workforce, not just in terms of age, but in background, experience, thinking style and neurodiversity. Who would want to work with a heterogeneous team where everyone thinks and acts the same? Not me. Yet the irony is that companies spend time trying to decode generations when they should be trying to understand people.

Generational labels might make for catchy headlines. They create simple stories in a world that feels increasingly complicated. But exceptional businesses are not built by Gen Z, Millennials, or Gen X. They are built by people: people who feel trusted, challenged and valued for what makes them different.

Alex Wright is co-founder and chief executive of Dash Water, a £22 million-turnover healthy soft drink brand sold in 25 countries

Business

EQUITY PRICES

Dividend yields Please note dividend yields are supplied by ICE Data Services. The yield is the sum of a company's annual 12-month dividend payments divided by the last day's closing share price.
12-month high and low High/low prices for UK equities and investment trusts are based on intra-day figures.

Automobiles & Part

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
354.35	Aston Martin Lag	34⅞	- ¼	...	-0.7

Banking & Finance

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
4,517.19	**Aberdeen Group**‡	245⅜	- 7¼	5.9	11.4
2.08	Acuity RM♦	0⅝		...	-3.4
12,043.90	**Admiral**	3932	+ 46	3.6	16.0
2,435.07	AJ Bell	618	+ 7½	2.4	24.1
55,869.60	AON Corp‡	26338	- 220⅛	0.9	...
137.59	Arbuthnot♦	830	- 2½	6.6	7.6
1,625.05	Ashmore Group	228	+ 3⅜	7.4	18.7
61,395.10	Australia & NZ	2035¾	+ 60¾	5.6	20.0
21,808.50	**Aviva**	726⅝	+ 14	5.5	27.0
161,583.00	Banco Santander	1100	+ 4	1.5	14.1
70,193.60	**Barclays**‡	520½	+ 4½	2.2	11.9
2.17	Blue Star Capital♦	4¼		...	-2.2
242.15	BP Marsh & Ptnrs♦	676		5.4	5.1
3,001.40	Bridgepoint Grp	340⅜	- 1⅝	2.8	68.1
777.38	Chesnara	335½	- 4½	6.7	-66.4
245.29	City of London Grp	484	- 8	6.8	16.4
645.06	Close Bros	428	- 5¼	...	-6.4
1,964.30	CMC Markets‡	702	+ 12	2.0	25.5
54,341.80	Deutsche Bank	2844¼	+ 25¾	3.0	10.5
1,059.82	EFG-Hermes Hldgs	73¾	- ⅜	0.9	...
51.19	EPE Special Opps♦	209	- 2	...	8.6
7.99	Fiske♦	67½		1.7	5.9
87.74	Foresight Ventures VCT	83		4.3	15.5
1,511.50	Georgia Capital	4485	+ 85	...	2.8
72.91	Hansard Global	53	+ 1	8.4	40.8
155.85	Helios U/W♦	223½	+ ½	4.5	7.7
5,743.25	**Hiscox**‡	1795	- 34	2.2	13.5
262,444.00	**HSBC**‡	1527¾	- 1⅜	3.6	17.1
4,529.74	**IG Group**‡	1363	+ 20	3.1	9.4
145.84	Impax Asset Mgmt♦	114¾	+ 2	8.7	7.2
5,714.82	**ICG**	2060	+ 18	4.2	12.4
2,499.14	Intl Public P'ship‡	139⅝	- 3¾	6.3	-9.9
4,695.08	**Investec**	674½	+ 1	5.7	8.7
10.30	Investment Co	76¼	+ 1¼	...	...
612.22	IP Group	69¼	- 1⅛	1.8	9.6
3.47	Jarvis Securities♦	7¾	- ¼	45.2	2.4
842.45	Jupiter Fund Mgmt‡	162¾	+ 1¼	3.7	8.5
1,456.74	Lancashire Hldgs‡	597	- ½	2.8	6.7
16,853.40	**Legal & General**	305	- 11⅜	7.2	30.5
5,820.92	**Lion Finance Group**	13510	+ 1070	2.4	9.5
198.99	Liontrust Asset Mgmt	316	+ 11	6.0	20.5
61.84	Livermore Invs Grp♦	37⅜		8.3	16.9
66,956.50	**Lloyds Banking**‡	115¼		3.5	16.5
12.47	LMS Capital	15½	+ ¼	25.9	...
41,552.80	**London Stock Exchange**‡	8536	- 384	1.9	35.8
8,577.31	**M&G**	355⅞	- 7⅛	5.8	28.2
3,592.39	Man Group‡	314	+ 2¼	4.0	27.6
30.12	Manx Financial Grp♦‡	24½	+ ½	2.1	4.5
13.64	Marechale Capital♦	5¼	+ ½	...	-16.6
1,213.86	Metro Bank	180¼	+ 6⅜	...	23.1
67,507.10	National Australia	2165½	- 45	4.1	18.7
56,336.40	**NatWest Group**‡	707¾	- 4⅝	4.9	13.2
361.51	PayPoint	608½	+ 8	6.5	10.3
25,633.70	**Prudential**	1025	- 19½	1.9	9.0
5.47	Quantum Blockchain♦	0⅜		...	-1.9
2,711.27	Quilter	198¼	- 1¾	3.2	22.3
1,547.38	Rathbones Group	1710	- 10	5.8	15.8
199.84	Rockwood Strategic	320½	+ 4½	...	0.0
241.19	S & U	1985	+ 45	5.8	10.2
12.49	Sancus Lending♦	1⅛		...	7.2
223.03	Schroder REIT	45⅝	+ ⅜	7.9	...
9,390.45	**Schroders**‡	583	- 1	3.8	17.1
6,093.49	**St James's Place**‡	1180	+ 33	1.5	11.8
48,561.60	**Standard Chart'd**‡	2219		2.3	15.4
9,333.38	**Standard Life**	927	- 14½	6.0	-196.8
33,406.90	Sun Life Canada	5999⅛	- 75⅞	3.4	...
14.66	Tavistock Invs♦	3	- ⅛	3.4	2.5
2,748.45	TBC Bank Grp‡	4932	- 4	5.2	6.9
12.22	Tern♦	1⅜		...	-1.6
48.57	Time Finance♦	52½	+ ½	...	8.3
4.16	Tooru♦	0¼		...	-1.8
2.55	Truetide♦	3¼	- ⅛	...	-5.8
204.94	Vanquis Banking Gp	79⅞	- 1⅝	...	25.0
44.24	Volvere♦	2020	- 80	...	10.7
196,905.00	Wells Fargo‡	6511⅜	+ 43	2.3	...
63,324.90	Westpac Bkg Corp	1851½	- 134	4.4	17.6
9.58	Worsley Investors	28⅜		...	...
81,541.00	Zurich Insurance	53920¼	- 486¾	5.1	18.5

Construction & Property

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
81.30	Alumasc♦	225	+ 5	4.9	8.7
13.90	Aseana Properties	4¾		...	1.2
6.58	Built Cybernetics♦	1⅝	+ ⅛	...	-165.0
4,369.43	Balfour Beatty	915½	+ 34½	1.6	17.4
4,572.41	**Barratt Redrow**	326¼	+ 2¾	5.2	24.0
2,464.48	Bellway	2182	+ 58	3.3	16.4
3,313.76	Berkeley	3622	- 4	...	10.9
1,784.08	Big Yellow Grp	906	+ 6	5.2	...
55.34	Billington Hldgs♦	415	- 10	2.7	39.9
209.97	Boot (Henry)	156	- 1	5.0	8.9
1,223.15	Breedon	352⅜	- ¾	4.3	14.6
4,485.12	**British Land**	437⅝	- 5⅝	5.3	...
27.25	Cardiff Property	2750		1.1	20.7
2,315.24	Derwent London	2096	- 4	3.9	...
42.52	DCI Advisors♦	4¾		...	-2.7
19.22	First Property♦	13	+ ½	1.9	7.2
4.36	Fletcher King♦	42½		5.3	28.7
108.99	Foxtons Group‡	36⅞	- ⅝	3.2	8.6
630.73	Galliford Try Hldgs	625	+ 6	3.2	18.5
715.43	Genuit Group	283⅝	- 30	4.5	15.6
160.68	Gleeson (MJ)	275	- 1	4.0	10.1
1,963.25	Grafton Grp Units	1048	+ 5¼	3.6	14.9
1,305.97	Grainger	176⅛	- ¼	4.8	6.4
1,463.90	Great Portland Est	360⅜	+ 2⅝	2.3	0.0
2,230.82	Hammerson	381¼	+ 6¾	4.8	...
587.21	Harworth Group	179⅝	- 1⅜	1.0	61.9
6.21	Heath (Samuel)♦	245	- 10	5.3	30.6
237.59	Helical	205	+ 1	1.3	42.4
353.74	Ibstock	89½	- 3⅜	2.2	...
552.99	James Halstead♦	132¾	+ 4¼	6.7	13.7
2,150.49	Keller‡	3108	+ 32	2.6	15.4
15,552.40	Kingspan Group	8622½		0.6	27.3
5,308.48	**Land Securities**	712½	- 2	5.8	...
4,560.91	**LondonMetric Prop**	194	- 1	6.4	...
3.79	Macau Prop Opp Fd	6⅛		...	-0.4
430.81	Marshalls	170¼	- 11⅛	4.1	29.9
71.68	Michelmersh Brick♦	78	+ 1½	5.9	19.4
2.11	Mindflair♦	0⅜		...	-1.2
2,221.78	Morgan Sindall	4576	+ 82	3.6	12.3
343.11	Mountview Estates‡	8800		6.0	16.9
356.20	NewRiver REIT	82	+ 1	8.2	...
29.08	Palace Capital	183	+ 7	8.2	40.7
51.22	Panther Securities♦	296		4.1	12.1
3,813.47	**Persimmon**	1187	+ 20½	5.1	13.3
0.99	Plaza Centers	14½		...	-0.1
2,482.26	Primary Health Props‡	95⅝	- ¼	7.6	...
53.68	Real Estate Inv♦	30¾	- ¼	4.9	-61.4
1,377.58	Safestore	630½	+ 4	4.9	...
1,896.80	Savills	1090	+ 114	2.2	21.0
0.65	Secure Prop Dev & Inv♦	0½		...	-0.1
13,010.10	**Segro**‡	960¾	+ 1¼	3.3	...
2,955.60	Shaftesbury Capital	150¾	+ 5¾	2.9	8.1
100.91	SIG	8½	- ⅛	...	-1.6
1,456.00	SigmaRoc♦	130⅝	- 4⅜	...	17.9
1,536.68	Sirius Real Estate	96½	- 2½	5.7	7.5
43.55	Smart (J)	112½		2.9	8.6
48.18	Steppe Cement♦	22		...	19.7
2,995.75	Taylor Wimpey	86	+ 1⅜	4.8	30.7
54.60	Town Centre	129½	+ 1	3.9	...
1,395.12	Travis Perkins	656½	- 18½	1.8	-7.9
4,370.34	**Tritax Big Box**‡	161	- 5¼	5.1	...
2,721.92	Unite Group	529½	- 3	7.1	...
883.45	Vistry Group	278	- 5⅝	...	6.6
705.18	Workspace Group	366	+ 2¾	7.1	...
24.67	Wynnstay Props♦	915	+ 20	3.1	12.7

Consumer Goods

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
695.50	AEP Plantations	182	+ 5⅜	3.3	10.7
10.96	Airea♦	26½		3.8	10.4
14,425.10	**AB Foods**	2052	- 78	3.1	14.5
676.65	Barr (AG)	604	- 3	3.1	14.3
91,094.80	**British Amer Tob**‡	4214	- 207	5.8	12.0
3,897.11	**Burberry Group**	1079½	- 85	...	...
357.97	C&C Group	96⅝	- 2½	5.1	...
19.20	Capital Metals♦	3⅞	- ¼	...	-33.0
43.44	Churchill China♦	395	+ 5	5.3	9.9
16,787.20	**Coca-Cola HBC**	4606	- 354	2.2	20.8
73.35	Colefax♦	1450	- 5	0.4	10.3
2,856.51	Cranswick‡	5260	- 10	2.1	17.8
39,277.20	**Diageo**	1764	- 26	2.1	30.6
1.22	Distil♦	0		...	-0.6
894.32	Evans (M.P.)♦	1716	+ 40	3.5	10.6
72.77	Fevara	140½	+ 1	1.7	6.1
6,314.87	**Games Workshop**	19110	+ 230	3.0	30.6
4,737.86	Glanbia	1983⅛	- 89¾	1.9	36.7
2,125.46	Greencore	264⅜	+ 1	1.0	20.0
7.93	Headlam	9¾	- 2⅝	...	-0.1
553.68	Hilton Food	615½	+ 2½	5.7	7.0
20,009.70	**Imperial Brands**	2609	- 182	6.4	10.4
11,216.90	Kerry Group	7077½	- 66¼	1.7	20.7
282.25	McBride	162⅝	- 2	1.8	8.3
155.27	Mulberry Group♦	220	+ 45	...	-16.9
405.92	Nichols♦‡	1110	+ 70	3.5	18.9
294.19	Norcros	326	- 8	3.5	...
395.17	Origin Ents♦	367	+ 1	4.0	8.7
0.29	PACSCo♦	0⅜		...	-0.0
25.85	Portmeirion♦	50½	+ ½	...	-1.1
27.33	Provexis♦	1⅛	+ ⅛	...	-58.2
446.73	PZ Cussons	104¼	- 2⅝	3.6	22.2
46.90	REA	107	- 3	...	-207.1
10.48	Tandem♦	190	+ 3	1.6	12.3
54.63	The Character Grp♦	315		2.2	-46.7
2.88	Ukrproduct Grp♦	7¼	+ ¾	...	-16.9
98,872.90	**Unilever**‡	4589½	- 80½	3.6	12.4
64.47	Victoria♦	55¾	- 4½	...	-0.2

Engineering

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
0.41	Assoc Brit Eng	20		...	-6.9
589.43	Avon Technologies‡	1948	+ 52	1.0	75.6
5,881.44	**Babcock**‡	1193½	+ 7	0.6	28.3
67,820.40	**BAE Systems**	2258	+ 38	1.7	32.8
11.52	Braime A N/V♦	1200		1.4	6.4
11.28	Braime Group♦	2350	+ 100	0.7	12.5
10.91	Caffyns	400		2.5	-9.8
10.17	Cap XX Ld♦	0⅛		...	-3.6
134.83	Castings‡	310	+ 19	5.9	17.9
22.68	Checkit♦	21	- ½	...	-8.1
1,708.96	Chemring Group‡	628	+ 1	1.3	35.3
13.34	Chesterfield Spec Cyl♦	34½		...	-38.3
674.80	Cohort♦	1434	+ 136	1.2	27.5
210.11	Dialight	520	+ 10	...	...
2.67	Feedback♦	6⅛		...	-0.2
331.19	Gooch & Housego♦	1210	- 10	1.1	88.3
1,470.38	Goodwin	19580	- 1070	1.4	59.8
13,993.70	**Halma**‡	3686	- 110	0.7	37.4
2,296.45	Hill & Smith	2930	- 165	...	28.5
3.56	Image Scan♦	2⅝		...	-12.4
7,337.35	**IMI**‡	3072	- 64	1.1	24.7
266.43	Judges Sci.♦	4000	- 250	2.9	48.4
11.15	LPA♦	82½		...	-31.2
6,159.46	**Melrose**‡	494¼	+ 8⅞	1.5	17.0
691.69	Morgan Advanced	250	- 4	4.9	33.3
99.24	Mpac♦	330	+ 2½	...	-10.4
261.42	MS Intl♦	1590	- 10	1.6	23.6
1,603.86	Oxford Instruments‡	2916	+ 28	0.8	34.5
19,903.00	Phillips Elec	2025	+ 37¾	3.6	-47.4
0.78	PipeHawk♦	2⅛		...	-3.0
3,766.81	Renishaw	5175	- 60	1.5	44.9
128,308.00	**Rolls-Royce**‡	1541	+ 11	0.7	22.2
3,958.16	Rotork‡	484⅜	- 2⅝	1.7	35.1
93.59	SDI Group♦	89½	- 1½	...	19.0
1,228.89	Senior	293	+ 1	0.7	-287.3
8,663.75	SKF Group	2031¾		3.0	30.4
7,677.91	**Smiths**	2613	- 85	1.8	30.5
103.53	Solid State♦	182½	- 3½	1.5	25.3
119.08	Somero Enter♦	230	- 2½	3.3	16.4
5,182.59	**Spirax Group**	7020	- 480	2.4	31.7
7.33	Tanfield♦	4½	+ ⅞	...	-4.4
288.00	Thorpe FW♦	257	+ 2	2.8	11.8
7.23	Transense Tech♦	47½	- 1	...	5.1
981.27	Vesuvius	395⅜	- 10	6.0	18.7
1,013.82	Volex‡	554	+ 1	0.9	21.3
6,910.87	**Weir**	2662	- 60	1.6	27.8
488.32	XP Power	1742	- 34	...	-41.5

Health

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
617.09	Advanced Medical♦	281		1.0	60.8
332.46	Allergy Therapeutics♦	5¼	- ¼	...	-6.2
15.06	CelLBxHealth♦	1⅜		...	-0.2
105.20	Anpario♦	525	- 5	2.4	13.1
177,748.00	**AstraZeneca**‡	11460	- 436	2.1	23.5
4.52	Cambridge Nutri Sci♦	1⅞	+ ⅛	...	2.7
4,480.34	**Convatec**	229⅝	- 2¾	2.4	36.2
16.10	Potter & Moore♦‡	23½		2.3	7.7
68.44	Eco Animal Health♦	101	+ 2½	...	31.0
108.52	EKF Diagnostics♦	25¼	- ¾	...	53.8
2.37	Futura Medical♦	0⅜	+ ⅛	...	-0.1
1,501.16	Genus	2256	- 48	1.5	77.0
73,525.30	**GSK**‡	1817½	- 143	3.9	12.9
1.37	Gunsynd♦	0⅛		...	-2.0
31,324.90	**Haleon**‡	355⅝	- 13¾	2.1	19.1
3,436.99	Hikma Pharma‡	1640	- 37	3.9	12.2
1,613.82	Hutchmed China♦	185	+ 1	...	4.7
27.39	ImmuPharma♦	4⅜	+ ⅜	...	-11.9
16.59	Inspiration Health♦	18½		...	-15.9
16.42	IXICO♦	7½	- ½	...	-4.1
11.99	Thalia Therapeutics♦	0⅝		...	-4.0
284.51	NIOX Group♦	67⅝	+ 5⅜	2.3	40.0
CHF232.72bn	Novartis	CHF122.44	- 3.54	3.0	39.9
589.52	Oxford Biomedica	487	- 18	...	-18.1
2.04	Physiomics♦	0½		...	-2.6
6.33	Proteome Sciences♦	1¾		...	-1.7
32,474.30	**Reckitt Benck**‡	5114	- 192	4.2	10.9
16.45	RUA Life Sci♦	26½	+ 2½	...	-113.7
36.92	Sareum Holdings♦	26½	+ 3½	...	-11.0
9,178.09	**Smith & Neph**	1096	- 17	2.7	20.6
942.46	Spire Healthcare	234		0.6	57.1
4.01	Talisman Metals♦	6¼	- ¼	...	1.8
2.11	ValiRx♦	0⅛		...	-0.3

Industrials

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
174.15	Accsys Tech♦	70⅝	+ 1⅝	...	30.9
38,770.80	BASF	4344	- 58¾	4.4	27.9
40,207.30	Bayer	4092⅝	- 180¾	0.2	-13.0
1,612.51	Coats Group	84⅛	- 2⅜	2.9	19.3
4,549.32	**Croda**	3258	- 7	3.4	73.4
42.52	Cropper (James)♦	445	- 5	...	14.4
1,036.03	Elementis‡	182⅜	- 4¾	1.8	-31.7
66.20	Hardide♦	84	- 16	...	...
15,887.10	International Paper‡	3000	- 50	4.6	-7.5
3,692.98	Johnson Matthey	2196	+ 28	3.5	-38.4
3,893.26	Mondi	882	- 39⅝	1.4	27.6
22.20	Robinson♦	132½	+ 7½	4.5	9.7
7,451.31	Swire Pacific	956½	+ 21½	3.9	46.9
18.91	Symphony Enviro♦	8	- ¼	...	-7.4
165.97	Synthomer	101¼	- 20¾	...	-1.1
41,716.20	Takeda Pharma	2603⅞	+ 3⅜	3.6	-58.0
703.98	Victrex	808	- 14	7.4	25.2
86.15	Wynnstay♦	372½	- 2½	4.8	37.7
221.17	Zotefoams	445½	+ 25½	1.8	9.6

Leisure

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
99.68	Accesso Tech♦	299½	- 3½	...	14.5
193.03	Celtic♦	203	- 2	...	5.7
760.50	Domino's Pizza‡	197⅝	- 7¾	5.8	13.1
3,565.57	**Entain**	557¼	+ 12¼	3.6	-5.3
208.31	Evoke	46¼	+ 1	...	-0.4
82.81	Gaming Realms♦	30⅝	- 1⅜	...	15.1
5.53	Heavitree♦	300		2.2	5.5
7.16	Heavitree A♦	225		2.9	4.2
$23.703bn	**InterCont'l Hotels**	$158.85	+ 0.85	1.2	32.4
1,701.05	Mitch & Butlers	283½	+ 1	...	9.5
283.11	On The Beach	197⅜	+ 7⅝	2.0	35.9
493.73	Rank Group	105⅜	+ 2⅝	3.3	16.5
1,609.63	SSP	212	- 2¼	2.1	-22.8
8.37	Bow Street Group♦	0⅜		...	-0.3
865.63	Wetherspoon JD	816	+ 2	1.5	13.6
4,159.99	**Whitbread**	2480	- 37	3.9	20.1

Media

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
6.09	Aeorema Comms♦	64½	+ 4½	4.1	51.2
17.55	Altitude Group♦	24	+ ½	...	-96.0
10.63	Arcontech Group♦	79½		5.0	11.3
4,210.74	**Autotrader**	539⅝	+ 18⅝	2.1	15.8
541.88	Bloomsbury Pub‡	664	+ 14	2.4	20.0
1.69	Caledonian Hldgs♦	1¼	- ⅜	...	-0.1
8.86	Catalyst Media♦	42½		...	23.1
2.15	Catenai♦	0⅛		...	-3.0
13.24	Ebiquity♦	9⅜		...	-0.9
303.34	Future	337⅜	+ 7¾	5.0	5.4
592.56	GlobalData	83⅝	- 3¼	1.8	19.0
89.06	IG Design Group♦	94	- 8	1.1	-0.8
11,637.40	**Informa**‡	925¾	+ 21⅜	2.4	...
2,694.62	ITV	71½	- 1½	7.0	12.1
445.07	ME Group	118¾	- 3⅜	7.1	7.9
1.75	Mediazest♦	0⅛		...	14.7
19.09	Mission Group♦	21	+ 3	...	-1.0
1,067.40	Mony Group‡	208¼	+ 6¾	6.1	13.6
7,727.07	News Corp A	2143⅜	+ 16⅜	0.7	...
4,413.61	News Corp B	2444½	+ 14⅞	0.6	...
348.78	Next 15 Group♦	341½	+ 14½	4.5	-11.4
7,198.75	**Pearson**‡	1197	- 27	2.1	23.3
4.22	Primorus Inv♦	3⅜		...	5.0
136.09	Reach‡	42¾		13.8	-1.0
9.69	React♦	41	+ ½	...	-28.3
44,190.00	**Relx**‡	2526	- 101	2.7	22.4
3,781.38	Rightmove	511	+ 38	2.1	18.2
2.72	SpaceandPeople♦	136	- 1½	...	6.3
50.46	STV Group	108	+ 1¼	...	-10.0
41.24	System1 Group♦	325		1.8	31.2
10,195.90	21st Cent Fox A	5113¼		0.8	...
7,379.90	21st Cent Fox B	3350¾		1.3	...
249.25	Wilmington	278		4.2	21.6
4,304.42	WPP	399	- 12⅜	3.8	7.9
17.17	Zinc Media♦	57½	+ 1	...	-5.6

Natural Resources

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
0.60	ADM Energy#	0		...	1.2
124.60	H-Power♦	11	- ⅛	...	-4.5
195.35	Afentra♦	71	+ 10⅜	...	-68.7
3.12	Arkadian Strat Metals♦	0		...	-1.0
10.63	Alien Metals♦	0⅛		...	-15.0
58.17	Aminex	1¼	+ ⅛	...	-14.7
17,200.00	Anglo Amer Plat	6483⅜	- 117¾	7.0	24.2
45,354.90	**Anglo Amer**	3850	- 172	0.7	-15.8
467.08	Anglo Asian Mng♦‡	407½	- 14½	0.7	35.6
35,343.00	**Antofagasta**	3585	- 396	1.6	36.0
14.76	Arc Minerals♦	0⅝		...	-1.3
41.71	Ariana Resources♦	1½		...	-155.0
11.96	Arkle Resources♦	0¾		...	-11.0
52.60	Asiamet Resources♦	1½		...	-13.1
1,409.97	Atalaya Mine	917	- 51½	1.1	17.6
3.56	Beacon Energy♦	2⅞	- ⅛	...	-0.7
6.47	Beowulf Mining♦	10		...	-3.0

PRICES

Major indices

New York	
Dow Jones	53732.41 (-107.58)
Nasdaq	26686.73 (-116.29)
S&P 500	7785.76 (-13.23)
Tokyo	
Nikkei 225	68713.80 (+405.21)
Hong Kong	
Hang Seng	25116.85 (-279.66)
Amsterdam	
Amsterdam AEX	1117.82 (-1.77)
Sydney	
Australia AO	9313.20 (-68.20)
Frankfurt	
DAX	26440.31 (+140.57)
Singapore	
Singapore Straits	5743.59 (+23.54)
Brussels	
Brussels BEL20	5664.48 (-44.24)
Paris	
Paris CAC	8636.80 (-13.76)
Zurich	
Zurich SMI	14390.67 (-84.46)
Zurich DJ Euro Stoxx 50	6539.59 (-5.88)
London	
FTSE100	10750.11 (-22.56)
FTSE250	24867.42 (+29.71)
FTSE350	5868.68 (-10.18)
FTSE Eurotop 100	5082.73 (-19.29)
FTSE All Share	5805.22 (-9.88)
FTSE Non Financials	6325.66 (-21.33)
TechMark Focus	9617.23 (+52.74)
US$	1.3549 (+0.0040)
Euro	1.1699 (-0.0002)
SDR	0.9902 (+0.0016)
CPI Jun (2015=100)	142.5
RPI Jun (1987=100)	416.5
RPIX Jun (1987=100)	409.7

London Financial Futures

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol	Open Int
Long Gilt	26-Sep	87.19	87.26	86.34	86.62	185358	1326786
	26-Dec	87.14	87.14	86.31	86.57	304	2169
	27-Mar				86.49	0	
3-Mth Sonia Index	26-Jun	96.25	96.2525	96.25	96.2525	6269	392751
	26-Sep	96.155	96.16	96.145	96.155	108897	431060
	26-Dec	95.95	95.965	95.925	95.945	90219	563792
	27-Mar	95.815	95.825	95.765	95.79	49680	387952
3 Mth Sonia Index	27-Jun	95.75	95.76	95.69	95.715	68434	391831
	27-Sep	95.73	95.745	95.665	95.695	66222	244798
	27-Dec	95.75	95.76	95.68	95.71	61724	285243
3-Mth Euribor	26-Sep	97.41	97.41	97.395	97.4	94255	642077
	26-Dec	97.26	97.26	97.23	97.24	145619	940905
	27-Mar	97.16	97.165	97.12	97.13	136073	478708
	27-Jun	97.12	97.12	97.065	97.08	125605	487796
	27-Sep	97.12	97.12	97.06	97.075	99371	438246
3-Mth Saron Index	26-Jun	100.0475	100.0475	100.0475	100.0475	239	70474
	26-Sep	100.04	100.045	100.04	100.04	9359	74296
	26-Dec	99.99	100	99.99	99.99	8280	53599
	27-Mar	99.905	99.915	99.89	99.895	3253	36091
	27-Jun	99.825	99.83	99.8	99.81	3546	25026
	27-Sep	99.76	99.765	99.73	99.745	2542	25610
	27-Dec	99.71	99.715	99.68	99.695	1637	19703
FTSE100	26-Sep	10824.5	10834	10751	10782	42294	481989
	26-Dec				10848.5	0	1302
FTSEurofirst 80	26-Sep				8927.3	0	
	26-Dec				8974.1	0	

Tradeweb

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Commodities

Natural gas $

2.717	-0.01

Light crude oil

82.33	+1.08

Crude oils ($/barrel FOB)

WTI SEP 26	82.37	1.12
WTI OCT 26	81.46	1.02
WTI NOV 26	80.01	0.94
WTI DEC 26	78.41	0.81
WTI JAN 27	77.04	0.74

Products

Fuel Oil	488.338	7.807
Euro Naphtha	741.724	14.867

ICE futures

Gas oil

Sep1246.25-1245.25	Jan1047.5-1046.75
Oct1194.25-1193.75	Feb1019-1018.25
Nov1138.75-1138	
Dec1084-1083.5	Volume: 164480

Brent

Oct88.52-88.49	Jan82.49-82.46
Nov86.49-86.46	Feb81.15-81.11
Dec84.26-84.24	Volume: 778595

Cocoa

Sep4124 +13	Sep 4254 +2
Dec4170 +13	Dec 4199 -4
Mar4283 +18	Mar 4283 +18
May4290 +12	May 4290 +12
Jul 4291 +17	Volume: 23125

Robusta coffee

Sep 3621 -52	May 3535 -58
Nov 3594 -57	Jul 3519 -47
Jan 3576 -60	
May3535 -58	Volume: 32818

White sugar

Oct511.2 -7.3	Aug502.7 -4.6
Dec 509.5 -7	Oct 497.4 -3.6
May510.2 -5.2	
May510.2 -5.2	Volume: 26534

London grain futures

Liffe wheat (close £/t)

Nov203 +2.25	May209.75 +2.75
Jan 205.25	Jul 212
Mar 207.5	Volume: 6940

INVESTMENT COMPANIES

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
28,058.20	**3i Group**	2785	– 82	3.0	5.2
3,532.60	3i Infrastructure	383	– 1½	3.5	12.0
1,346.25	Aberforth Smlr‡	1752	+ 20	2.7	27.4
5,136.09	**Alliance Witan**	1387	+ 3	2.1	75.0
114.55	Artemis UK Future Lead‡	394½	– 2½	3.9	31.9
3.56	Athelney Trust	165		6.1	14.5
1,044.28	AVI Global	264½	– 1½	1.7	52.2
380.30	AVI Japan	171	+ ½	1.3	58.2
166.33	Baillie Gifford Ch Gr	306	– 7½	0.8	...
350.75	Baillie Gifford Eur Gr	122½	– 2½	0.6	...
694.57	Baillie Gifford Jpn	1068	– 10	0.9	...
335.18	Baillie Gifford SN	172½	+ ¼	0.4	...
237.78	Baillie Gifford UK Gr‡	224	– 6	2.8	36.0
1,401.75	Bankers Invstmt Tst‡	153	+ ¾	1.8	68.0
1,277.82	BH Macro GBP	426	+ 6½	...	20.1
322.38	Biotech Growth	1698	+ 6	...	493.7
191.96	BlckRck Amer Inc‡	285	– 2	5.2	...
179.50	BlckRck Eng&Res Inc	179½	– 1	3.2	51.3
316.47	BlckRck Fro Inv	191½	– 1	4.0	25.6
555.19	BlackRock Grt Euro	617	+ 3	1.2	89.6
43.33	BlckRck Inc&Grth‡	234	+ 5	3.3	32.4
678.80	BlckRck Smlr‡	280	– 3	2.8	32.0
1,775.64	BlckRck Wld Min	950	– 32	2.5	39.5
179.89	Brown Adv US Sm	1640	+ 7½	...	273.8
673.10	Brunner‡	1568	+ 4	1.7	56.3
2,028.60	Caledonia Inv	3961½	+ 10½	1.9	51.5
3,046.74	City of Lon IT‡	591	– 6	3.7	27.4
	Crystal Amber Fd	88		-63.8	...
356.86	CT Priv Eq Ord	500	– 12	5.6	...
332.08	CT UK Cap & Inc	356	– 7	3.7	29.3
33.50	CT UK HIT B	109	– 3	5.5	22.5
108.59	CT UK HIT	119½	+ 1½	5.0	24.6
	Dunedin Ent‡	475	4.8	...	...
1,058.65	Edinburgh IT	850	– 11	3.8	32.0
899.30	Edin Wwide	260	+ 12½	...	234.2
6,470.43	**F&C Inv Trust**	344½	+ 1	1.2	76.7
382.60	Fidlty Asian Val	610	– 2	3.4	27.1
1,197.42	Fidelity China Sp	263	– 4½	3.4	28.5
573.53	FdityEmrgMkt	1478	+ 46	1.3	64.6
2,172.71	Fidelity European Trust	442	– 1	2.2	39.1
1,537.89	Fidlty Spec Val	474	– 1	2.2	38.6
815.10	Fins Gwth & Inc	818	– 8	2.5	43.3
643.72	GCP Infrastructure‡	82	+ ¼	8.5	38.1
98.19	Global Opps Tst	336	+ 6	3.1	43.1
	Golden Prospect‡	104½		-15.6	...
	Greencoat Renew	66⅞	8.7	-16.7	...
2,396.38	Greencoat UK Wind‡	111	– 3	9.6	-12.7
230.35	Hansa Investment Co‡	342	+ 8	1.3	77.7
423.87	Hansa Inv Co A‡	332	+ 11	1.3	75.5
2,432.62	Hbrvest Glbl Pt Eq	3500	+ 50	...	-59.3
350.90	Hend High Inc	207	– 3	5.4	18.4
537.53	Hend Smlr	990	– 1	2.9	37.9
586.47	Herald Inv Trust	3070	+ 35	...	...
1,934.29	HgCapital Trust	427	+ 31	1.2	...
2,582.43	HICL Infra	138½	– ¼	6.1	10.1
905.73	ICG Ent Tr‡	1490	+ 12	2.8	419.7
172.92	Impax Env Mkts	445	+ 5	1.1	90.1
975.38	Invesco Asia Dragon Tr	490½	– 2	3.9	49.9
498.09	Invesco Bond Inc‡	170½		7.2	13.0
532.58	Invesco Glbl Eq Inc	415	– 6	3.9	82.8
2,059.12	JPM American	1248	– 2	0.9	...
394.51	JPM Asia Gro & Inc‡	586	+ 16	5.3	...
216.46	JPM China‡	273	– 4	5.0	70.2
529.96	JPM Claverhs‡	974	– 10	3.7	28.9
97.86	JPM Emrg EMEA Sec	242	+ 2	0.2	...
1,550.02	JPM Em Mkts‡	164¾	+ 1½	4.6	71.7
570.13	JPMorgan Euro	635	+ 1	2.5	34.9
531.95	JPM Em Mkts Div Inc	206	+ 1	2.9	36.2
3,454.41	JPM GG&I	633	– 5½	3.9	76.5
381.01	JPM India‡	873	– 31	5.1	...
1,294.52	JPM Japan	858	+ 21	1.0	84.5
220.42	JPM Smllr Co	455	+ 3½	0.7	...
1,692.51	Law Debenture	1260	– 16	2.9	33.8
411.66	Lowland Inv	188		3.6	27.9
	Marwyn Val Inv‡	138½	6.5	15.3	...
1,814.98	Mercantile IT	288		2.9	31.1
999.47	Merchants Trust‡	677	– 8	4.4	22.1
210.45	Mid Wynd	788	– 6	1.1	...
2,498.71	Monks Inv Trust‡	1632	+ 12	0.1	...
205.28	Montanaro Eur Sml‡	177½	+ ½	0.9	91.5
936.87	Murray Income Trust‡	1004	– 12	4.1	26.0
2,197.64	Murray Intl‡	369	– 1	3.5	26.5
487.90	Pacific Assets Trust	427	+ 5	...	76.2
1,567.34	Pantheon Intl	406½	+ 6½	...	...
6,820.16	**Pershing Sqr‡**	3938	+ 26	1.4	3.8
1,696.66	Personal Assets	551	– 4	1.0	91.4
7,464.96	**Polar CapTech**	675	+ 11	...	403.6
1,763.62	Renewables Infra‡	75¼	– 2½	10.0	-14.0
3,274.81	RIT Cap Ptnr	2625	– 5	1.7	...
28.59	Riverstone	593	– 9	...	370.2
655.21	Schroder TotRt	708	+ 11	1.6	72.2
1,044.83	Schrd Asia Pac	837	+ 18	1.6	63.4
241.24	Schrod Inc Gwth	370	– 5	4.0	29.5
448.13	Schrod Jap Gwth	394	+ 1	3.1	57.0
166.81	Schrod UKMid	778	– 2	2.9	31.1
108.01	Schroder UK PP Tr	17	+	...	70.8
812.47	Scot American‡	559	– 11	2.9	35.7
15,309.20	**Scot Mortgage**	1435½	+ 39	0.3	...
1,260.44	Sequoia Eco‡	85⅞	– ⅞	8.0	12.6
249.00	STS Glbl Inc Grwth	229	– 3	3.7	35.3
2,937.75	Temp Emg Mkt	320	+ 8	1.6	59.4
1,304.32	Temple Bar	425	– 4	3.7	30.8
812.94	The Glbl Smaller‡	197¼	+ 1½	1.6	66.8
	Potentially AI	6½		-1.6	...
986.96	TR Property	311	– 5	5.2	19.7
	UIL	192½	4.2	19.0	...
485.78	Utilico Emerging Mkt‡	281	– 9	3.4	20.7
879.80	Vietnam Ent Inv	712	– 4	...	4.6
1,345.15	Ww Health	380½	– 3½	0.6	...

◆AIM company; # Price at suspension; ‡ Ex dividend; ‡ Ex scrip; ▲ Ex rights issue; ▼ Ex all; § Ex capital distribution; ᵛ figures or report awaited; . . . No significant data. Companies in bold are constituents of the FTSE 100 Index. Investment Cos sector Nav Dis or Prm supplied by ICE Data Services.

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
33.51	Bezant Resources◆	0½		...	12.1
162,909.00	BHP Group	3206	– 140	3.2	24.4
92.14	Border & Sthn Pet◆	10½	– ⅛	...	-88.5
36.74	Bougainville	9¾	– 1⅛	...	-13.7
82,117.10	**BP**‡	522⅜	+ 5¼	4.7	...
1.97	Buccaneer Energy◆	0		...	-0.7
20.08	Cadence Minerals◆	4¾	– ½	...	-8.8
9.42	Cadogan Energy	3¼		...	-11.3
329.66	Caledonia Mining◆	1705	+ 90	2.4	8.2
44.77	Caspian Sunrise‡	1⅞		...	3.5
258.04	Cent Asia Metals◆	145½	– 9⅛	8.3	-4.6
43.01	Chariot Ltd◆	1½		...	...
1.52	Clontarf Energy◆	0		...	-6.2
33.90	Corcel◆	0⅝		...	-2.1
8.51	Crism Therapeutics◆	10¾	+ 1¼	...	-2.1
1,567.46	DRD Gold	1804	+ 3⅝	2.3	15.2
6.66	ECR Minerals◆	0¼		...	-3.1
3.15	Empyrean Energy◆	0		...	-0.4
9,933.23	**Endeavour**	4111	+ 65	3.2	19.9
458.80	EnQuest	24½	+ 1¾	3.3	...
67.88	Eurasia Mining◆	2¼		...	15.3
25.02	Europa Oil & Gas◆	1⅞	+ ⅛	...	-9.5
170.95	Ferrexpo#	28⅝		...	-4.6
21,222.50	**Fresnillo**‡	2880	+ 16	3.9	20.8
151.34	Galantas Gold◆	24	– ½	...	-6.5
14.62	GCM Resources◆	3⅞	+ ⅛	...	-5.6
5.39	Gem Diamonds	3⅞	– ¼	...	-0.1
4.96	Getech◆	3¼	+ ⅛	...	-7.7
64,429.80	**Glencore**	548⅞	– 8⅛	2.3	...
5.86	Geo Exploration◆	0⅛		...	-4.5
26,503.10	Gold Fields	2961½	– 80½	3.9	...
30.92	Goldplat◆	18	– ½	2.9	30.0
10.48	Goldstone Res◆	0¾	– ⅛	...	-0.8
4,341.48	Greatland Resources◆	643½	+ 2½	...	19.3
469.61	Griffin Mining◆	271	– 22	...	30.3
391.14	Gulf Keystone	179¼	+ 5⅞	7.1	35.0
2,621.17	Hochschild	509½		0.9	17.7
742.68	Hunting	488	+ 45	2.0	25.2
4.56	Ironveld◆	0		...	-2.2
755.71	ITM Power◆	109¼	– ⅛	...	-14.8
87.23	Jubilee Metals◆	2¼	+ ¼	...	-3.7
1.33	Karel Diamond Res◆	0⅝		...	-3.9
166.92	KEFI Gold and Copper◆	1¼		...	-11.0
179.35	Kenmare Res	201	– 9	...	-0.7
6.70	Landore Res◆	1¾		...	-1.8
2.51	Lansdowne Resources◆	0⅛		...	-1.6
13.03	Lexington Gold◆	2¼	– ⅛	...	-28.7
426.36	Metals Exploration◆	14	– ½	...	18.0
2.45	Nativo Resources◆	0⅛		...	-0.1
6.61	Nostrum Oil & Gas	4	+ ⅜	...	-0.0
15.67	Oriole Resources◆	0⅜		...	-16.0
	Ormonde Mining			...	...
68.19	Orosur Mining◆	17⅛	+ 1	...	...
2,645.84	Pan African Res	108⅝	– 1¼	2.0	20.5
200.32	Pantheon Res◆	13¼	– ½	...	-49.0
22.40	Parkmead Group◆	20½	– 1	...	3.1
21.10	Petra Diamonds	6	– ½	...	-0.2
1.77	Petrel Resources◆	0⅞		...	-4.0
19.05	Petro Matad◆	1		...	-4.6
6.30	Plexus Holdings◆	3⅝	+ ⅛	...	-1.4
409.02	Porvair‡	878	– 22	0.8	22.3
15.18	Prospex Energy◆	3½	+ ⅜	...	-5.2
23.72	Quadrise◆	1⅜		...	-6.4
9.06	Reabold Resources◆	62½	– 2½	...	-781.2
1.98	Red Rock Res◆	0		...	-0.3
32,618.10	Rio Tinto Ltd‡	8772½	– 528½	3.9	16.7
88,601.30	**Rio Tinto**‡	7059	– 469	4.9	15.6
24.18	Rome Resources◆	0⅜		...	-15.4
228.92	Serabi Gold◆	300	– 18	1.7	5.7
973.92	Serica Energy◆	247¾	+ 18¼	6.5	-25.8
184,296.00	**Shell**‡	3320	+ 42½	4.6	14.8
4.24	Shuka Minerals◆	3	+ ⅛	...	-2.2
4.01	Sound Energy◆	1¾		...	-1.6
44.41	Star Energy◆	23	– 1	...	-4.1
10.73	Sunda Energy◆	2⅜	+ ⅞	...	-2.4
1.69	Sunrise Resources◆	0		...	-3.0
1.79	Synergia Energy◆	0		...	0.5
4.65	Tertiary Minerals◆	0½		...	-6.5
4.64	Thor Energy◆	0½		...	-0.5
147,794.00	Total Eng SE	6477½	+ 131½	4.6	12.7
7.06	Tower Resources◆	0		...	-0.4
223.62	Tullow Oil	14¾	+ ¾	...	50.0
3.47	UK Oil & Gas◆	0		...	-0.2
3.93	URU Metals◆	4		...	-2.7
6.00	Vast Resources#	0½		...	-0.5
4.54	Westmount Energy◆	3½		...	-8.3
14.87	Xtract Resources◆	1¼		...	-5.4
65.12	Zephyr Energy◆	3⅜	– ⅛	...	-7.2

Professional & Support Services

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
1,328.62	4imprint‡	4716	– 208	3.8	15.8
250.11	Andrews Sykes◆	597½	+ 22½	4.3	13.8
172.67	BTG Consulting◆	107	– ½	4.3	20.2
8,944.22	**Bunzl**	2758	– 112	2.7	19.6
329.87	Capita	273	+ 9	...	-1.9
8.40	CEPS◆	40	+ 1	...	-11.4
40.45	Christie Group◆	152½		2.3	30.0
40,237.70	**Compass**	2366¼	– 20½	2.1	29.1
9.67	Croma Security◆	70		3.4	12.2
5,432.97	**DCC Energy**	6360	– 15	3.4	...
17.95	Diales Grp◆	34	+ 2	4.4	26.2
9,899.19	**Diploma**	7370	– 330	0.9	53.4
787.61	DiscoverIE	809	– 24	1.6	26.8
301.33	Essentra	106¼	– 7¾	2.0	...
25,639.30	**Experian**	2890	– 7	1.8	23.8
18.15	FIH Group◆	145		4.7	-3.5
248.71	Hargreaves Servs◆	810	+ 12	4.9	8.7
8,989.62	**Intertek**	5840		2.8	26.8
1,692.00	Int'l Workplace	178¼	– 11¼	0.6	...
534.79	Johnson Service	147½	– 1½	3.3	15.8
89.26	Journeo◆	505	+ 10	...	20.8
1,142.11	Kier Group	261¾	+ 11½	3.0	20.5
209.66	Latham (J)◆‡	1040	+ 5	3.5	11.2
447.45	London Security◆	3650	+ 50	2.7	18.8
265.41	LSL Property Servs	268	+ 10	4.3	16.1
112.56	Macfarlane	72⅜	– ⅜	5.1	18.1
12.83	Maintel Holdings◆	68½	+ 3½	...	-5.8
6.86	Malvern Int'l◆	20½	– 1	...	-2.7
358.74	Mears Group	431	– 24	4.2	7.7
674.98	Michael Page	205⅞	+ 11¼	2.3	20.8
2,706.95	Mitie Group‡	208	+ 1¾	2.2	31.5
7.18	MobilityOne◆	6¾		...	-2.1
10.37	Newmark Security◆	110		...	15.6
3.77	Norman Broadbent◆	187½	+ 2½	...	5.9
17.94	Northern Bear◆	130½	+ 7½	5.7	4.3
74.64	NWF Group◆	150½	– 3½	5.8	8.1
44.92	PCI-PAL◆	62	+ 2	...	...
5.92	Petards◆	9¾	– ½	...	-14.6
0.80	PHSC◆	7¾		...	-2.6
11.01	PowerHouse Energy◆	0¼		...	-3.1
87.78	Record	44⅛	+ ⅛	8.2	11.2
733.05	Renew Holdings◆	926	+ 2	2.2	15.0
8,868.93	**Rentokil**‡	351½	– 9	2.7	25.5
402.84	Restore◆	299½	– 2	2.4	-63.7
4.47	River Global A◆‡	2½		...	-0.3
26.30	Roebuck Food Group◆	26		...	-9.0
3,467.14	RS Group	737½	– 6	3.1	21.3
11.30	RTC Group◆	90		7.5	6.4
446.51	RWS Holdings◆	120¼	+ 2¼	5.3	-4.5
233.79	Science Group◆	577	– 8	1.7	7.7
2,616.96	Serco	268⅛	+ 2¾	1.7	18.7
173.36	Smiths News	70	– 1¾	7.9	6.0
64.36	Software Circle◆	16½	+ ½	...	-78.6
51.16	Staffline Group◆	44¼	+ ⅜	...	11.3
355.34	SThree	290½	+ 5	4.9	21.2
35.59	Synectics◆	200	+ 15	2.5	9.1
5.97	Thruvision Group◆	1⅜	+ ¾	...	-1.3
132.79	Tribal◆	62	– 1	2.1	14.8
18.90	Vianet◆	66½	+ ½	3.6	46.5
1,092.70	ZIGUP	477½	+ 10½	5.7	14.2

Retailing

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
547.07	AO World	96¼	– 2¼	...	15.1
2,345.74	B&M European	233⅜	– 1⅜	4.1	14.3
253.69	Card Factory	75¼	– 1	6.6	8.4
891.50	CVS Group	1307	+ 7	0.7	17.7
377.60	DFS Furniture	160	+ 6½	0.6	15.2
1,797.27	Dunelm	891½	– 3½	2.9	11.5
3,644.07	Frasers Group	814½	+ 6	...	9.4
1,863.10	Greggs	1822	– 96	3.8	15.2
519.96	Halfords‡	237½	– 8½	3.8	15.6
4,519.77	**Howden Joinery**	827	– 13	2.7	16.8
2,876.32	Inchcape‡	825½	– 12	4.1	11.4
1.73	Imaging Biometrics	0¾		...	-4.1
4,441.01	**JD Sports**	92¾	– 2½	1.3	10.7
5,391.68	**Kingfisher**	326⅞	– ¾	3.8	23.4
7,977.66	**Marks & Spencer**	383½	– 25¼	1.1	30.2
3.95	Mothercare◆	0¾	– ¼	...	-0.8
47.57	Naked Wines◆	71¾	– 1½	...	-7.8
18,253.60	**Next**	15255	– 430	1.8	20.1
2,059.86	Ocado	244¼	+ 29½	...	5.2
952.10	Pets at Home	215	+ 3¼	3.4	15.6
495.50	Pinewood Tech Group	430½	+ ½	...	89.7
1,010.87	Saga	691	– 47	...	...
7,609.70	**Sainsbury's**	343¾	– 9¾	4.0	19.9
653.49	WH Smith	1429¼	– 23¼	...	-3.9
27.69	Sosandar◆	12¾	– ¼	...	91.1
28,913.50	**Tesco**	461½	– 13½	3.1	16.8
69.82	Topps Tiles	35½	– ⅜	8.7	11.6

Technology

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
497.45	Alfa Financial	166⅝	+ ¾	5.8	16.3
119.40	Aptitude Software	219	+ 21	2.5	30.0
48.16	Bango◆	62½		...	-8.6
54.73	BATM Adv Coms	12⅜	– ¼	...	-4.0
113.81	Berkeley Res	25½	+ ½	...	-66.7
6.72	Blackbird◆	1⅜	– ⅛	...	-2.3
37.79	Celebrus Tech◆‡	101	– 5½	3.4	-113.1
22.46	Cirata◆	13¾	+ ½	...	-3.1
1.50	CloudCoCo◆	0⅛		...	0.4
5,322.82	**Computacenter**	5010	+ 182	1.5	34.2
227.10	Concurrent Tech◆	250		0.5	42.7
38.92	Corero◆	7¾	– 1⅛	...	-18.0
439.61	Craneware◆	1284	– 34	2.6	31.0
5.75	Crimson Tide◆	87½		...	20.8
35.54	CyanConnode Hldgs◆	9⅞	+ ⅛	...	-8.5
4.25	Dillistone Group◆	12	+ 1	...	-8.2
2.83	Forgent◆	0		...	-0.0
125.58	FDM Group	1143½	+ 3¼	6.1	22.0
563.05	Filtronic◆	256	+ 12	...	...
367.57	GB Group	160½	– 76⅞	2.7	-5.2
48.73	Iliad◆	24½	– 1¼	...	-6.1
10.33	Ingenta◆	67½		6.7	5.6
70.67	Intercede◆	116½	– 1½	...	20.4
16.58	Iomart◆	14⅝	+ 2⅛	...	-1.8
619.61	IQE◆	46½	– ½	...	-12.3
249.89	LG Electronics	1454	– 6½	1.7	...
57.34	MTI Wireless◆	66½	+ 2	3.1	15.4
4.93	Nanoco Group	2½	+ ⅛	...	-2.2
203.01	Netcall◆	119	+ 1	0.8	48.6
6.64	Northamber◆	24½		2.4	-1.7
45.56	Oxford Metrics◆	40¾	+ 2¾	8.0	-74.0
13.81	Pennant Int'l◆	29		...	-5.8
1,182.74	Playtech	382½	+ 15	...	0.9
42.03	Pulsar Group◆	31	– 4	...	-4.0
2,906.43	QinetiQ‡	563	+ 9½	2.0	28.0
100.05	RM	102	+ 4	...	39.2
227.94	Seeing Machines◆	4⅞		...	-11.3
13.70	Shearwater Group◆	57½	– 4	...	-1.4
4,040.21	Softcat	2052	+ 58	1.5	30.8
0.69	Sorted Group‡	9		...	-0.2
23,547.50	Tele Ericsson	757½	+ 6½	3.1	11.4
9,590.14	**The Sage Grp**	1060½	+ 12	2.1	28.1
6.54	Touchstar◆	82½		3.9	-6.2
99.77	Tracsis◆	335	+ 25	0.8	...
71.54	Triad Group‡	410	+ 15	2.2	41.3
57.18	Water Intel◆	340	+ 32½	...	16.1
95.79	Xaar	120	+ 1	...	-27.9
14.01	Zoo Digital◆	141¼	+ 2¾	...	-5.1

Telecoms

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
11,954.40	**Airtel Africa**	329¼	– ¼	1.6	24.0
19,965.20	**BT Group**‡	200¼	+ 1	4.2	18.2
1,745.57	Currys	160¼	– 1¾	1.9	10.3
870.40	Gamma Comms	975½	– 12½	2.3	14.0
2,127.19	Helios Towers‡	204½	+ 2¼	0.9	75.0
16.30	Gana Media◆	0⅛		...	-2.9
666.53	Telecom Plus‡	855	– 2	5.8	8.4
28,090.20	**Vodafone**	121½	+ 1	3.3	-86.2

Transport

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
72.75	Braemar‡	220	– 5	3.2	30.4
1,543.39	Clarkson	4986	+ 146	2.3	23.3
5,086.25	EasyJet	671		2.0	10.2
1,009.71	FirstGroup	184⅝	+ ⅞	3.9	8.6
234.38	Fisher (James)	463	– 18	...	-53.2
19,479.40	**Intl Cons Air**	443½	+ 1½	1.5	7.3
1,017.00	Irish Cont	685	+ 20	2.0	17.2
158.19	Mobico Group	253½	+ ⅛	...	-1.1
6.07	Sutton Harbour◆	4½		...	-0.4
1,117.62	Wizz Air	1080	– 15	...	...

Utilities

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
7,204.03	**Centrica**	156	+ 1¾	3.6	-104.0
2,424.14	Drax Group	720	+ 2	4.2	34.8
50.63	Jersey Electricity	435	– 5	5.0	12.1
59,994.90	**National Grid**	1193½	– 6½	4.1	18.2
2,181.49	Pennon‡	462¼	– 7⅛	6.3	23.8
9,333.09	**Severn Trent**	3090	– 52	4.1	25.0
29,340.10	**SSE**‡	2420	+ 30	2.8	22.9
10,489.20	**United Utilities**	1412	– 24	3.8	16.4

Exchange rates

Australia $	1.91067 (+0.00136)
Canada $	1.87769 (+0.00011)
Denmark Kr	8.74487 (+0.00322)
Euro	1.1696 (+0.0002)
Hong Kong $	10.62 (+0.04)
Hungary	424.49 (+0.2)
Indonesia	24122.9 (+43.72)
Israel	4.0054 (+0.0027)
Japan Yen	215.649 (+0.532)
New Zealand $	2.29756 (-0.00793)
Norway Kr	12.77603 (-0.04767)
Poland	5.0368 (+0.00323)
Russia	114.029 (+2.006)
S Africa	21.92022 (+0.11432)
Sweden Kr	12.8804 (-0.00997)
Switzerland Fr	1.10076 (+0.00328)
Turkey Lira	64.8123 (+0.3125)
USA $	1.3536 (+0.0056)

Gold/precious metals

(US dollars per ounce)

Bullion: Open $4351.862

Close $4374.05 **High** $4396.945

Low $4311.01

AM $4349.90 **PM** $4390.70

Platinum $1750.4

Silver $64.647

Palladium $1315.742

Money rates %

Base Rates Clearing Banks: 3.75%
ECB Refi 2.40%
Fed Fund 3.5-3.75%
Halifax Mortgage Rate (SVR) 7.24%

Sterling spot and forward rates

Mkt Rates for	Range	Close	1 month	3 month
Copenhagen	8.7450	8.7418	-145.1	-409.87
Euro	1.1696	1.1693	-15.03	-41.97
Montreal	1.8777	1.8781	-25.3	-77.13
New York	1.3536	1.3480	-0.57	-1.38
Oslo	12.7828	12.8181	40.91	145.21
Tokyo	215.6590	215.0970	-53.47	-155.25
Zurich	1.1008	1.0974	-37.75	-114.4

Other sterling

Argentine peso	2013.79785-2013.79980
Australian dollar	1.91085-1.91106
Bahrain dinar	0.50930-0.51130
Brazilian real	7.06330-7.06530
Euro	1.16960-1.17040
Hong Kong dollar	10.62000-10.62400
Indian rupee	129.14810-129.22810
Indonesian rupiah	24122.90039-24162.90039
Kuwaiti dinar	0.41620-0.41820
Malaysian ringgit	5.52970-5.53170
New Zealand dollar	2.29833-2.29866
Singaporean dollar	1.73084-1.73278
South African rand	21.92094-21.93298
UAE dirham	4.97080-4.97280

Dollar rates

Australia	1.41130-1.41210
Canada	1.38734-1.38746
Denmark	6.46091-6.46134
Euro	0.86410-0.86450
Hong Kong	7.84677-7.84738
Japan	159.31700-159.32500
Malaysia	4.08400-4.08800
Norway	9.44400-9.44670
Singapore	1.27930-1.27950
Sweden	9.51680-9.51910
Switzerland	0.81325-0.81335

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Register

Obituaries

Professor Jason Arday

Cambridge sociology of education academic who made history before his career unravelled after accusations of plagiarism

In the prologue to his memoir, *Great and Unfortunate Things*, Jason Arday recalled a prophecy he received during a 2006 relief mission in Brazil. According to Arday, a local aid worker approached him and pronounced his fate: "You're destined to do great things. But I also believe you're destined for very sad and difficult things as well."

By the time Arday recounted the experience this year, he believed this prophecy had already been fulfilled. He assumed the "sad and difficult things" to be the obstacles he had faced on his journey from illiterate teenager to professional academic. Arday, who claimed to have been diagnosed with global developmental delay and autism spectrum disorder, was apparently unable to talk until the age of 11, and unable to read or write until he was 18. Despite this remarkable setback, by his early thirties he had begun writing and publishing academic papers, and he won his first academic post soon after.

The "great things" surely referred to his academic career, and his appointment, in 2023, to Cambridge University, where he was the youngest black person to hold a professorship. It was suggested by The Atlantic that, in this post, Arday became perhaps "the world's most famous living sociologist".

Like so many recipients of prophecy before him, however, Arday had made a grave misinterpretation: by the time he wrote his memoir, the great things had indeed come to pass, but the sad and difficult were yet to come.

The unravelling of Arday's academic career began in 2023, when he was asked by David Harris, an emeritus professor at Plymouth Marjon University, about some apparent plagiarism in some of his published articles. Arday rebuffed Harris in a furious email and lodged a complaint with the police. Two years later, Jack Grove, a reporter for Times Higher Education, wrote to Arday with similar allegations. He received a letter from Carter-Ruck, a leading defamation law firm, in response, and abandoned the story.

It was not until this year that the allegations against Arday were made public by Nathan Cofnas, an academic who had previously been sacked by Emmanuel College, Cambridge, in 2024 over his comments on race. Investigations by Cofnas, and later the Telegraph, revealed that over 100 passages in Arday's PhD had been lifted with only minor amendments from another thesis published six years earlier. They also discovered instances of Arday repeating quotes between papers and attributing them to different people.

Questions were also raised about Arday's achievements outside academia, including his claim that he had run 30 marathons in 35 days, nine of them with a fractured tibia, and raised over £5 million for charity. Arday later revised these figures and made hasty amendments to his memoir, which was then just weeks from release. Video of him claiming to have taken part in the *Seven Up* documentary series that began in the 1960s, 20 years before he was born, did not help his case.

The story soon captured the attention of international media, creating what the New Statesman called "a global furore". For some, like Cofnas, Arday's story seemed to justify their long-standing hostility towards university diversity, equity and inclusion policies. For others, it served as an indictment of declining academic standards more generally.

GRAEME ROBERTSON

Arday in 2023 when he became the youngest black professor in Cambridge University's history, aged 37; his memoir was published this month

Cambridge initially came to Arday's defence, claiming that the allegations against him constituted a "vile smear campaign". Arday himself admitted to having made unintentional errors in his work, but denied accusations of wilful misconduct, and argued that the scale of the backlash was unacceptable: "We're talking about academia here. I didn't murder somebody."

As a child 'they said I'd never be able to talk, read or write', he wrote

As the scrutiny intensified, however, Arday's position at the university became increasingly untenable, and he finally resigned on August 5, the day Cambridge launched an internal investigation. "I have concluded that the only way to bring this chapter to an end is to step away," he wrote in a statement. "I need time to heal. I need time to simply be myself again." By then, every public detail of his life was being re-examined by the media as a potential deception; precisely what Arday meant by "be myself" was known only to him.

Jason Atta Kwei Arday was born in 1985 in London to Ghanaian parents Joseph, a chef, and Gifty Arday, a mental health nurse. Family legend had it that the Tears for Fears song *Everybody Wants to Rule the World* was playing as he was born. Arday grew up in Clapham, and claimed he was diagnosed with global developmental delay and autism spectrum disorder at a young age. "They said that I was 'deficient', and that I'd never be able to talk, read or write," Arday wrote in his memoir. "To them, I was a lost cause." He claimed he communicated with sign language until, with the support of his mother and "thousands of hours" of speech therapy, he finally began to talk aged 11.

At school he earned just two GCSEs in physical education and textiles, and took a BTEC in sport and development at Merton College. "Sport was the only thing I was good at as a kid," Arday said. In the hope of teaching him the discipline needed to develop his literacy, his mother had introduced him to snooker at a young age, and he claimed he practised it six hours a day for eight years. Though he eventually gave up on his dream of playing professionally, by the age of 18 he had learnt to read and write and successfully enrolled in a degree in physical education and education studies at St Mary's University, Twickenham.

It was at about this time that Arday also became interested in fundraising. His charity running challenges were widely reported on by local news outlets, and led to his selection in 2012 as a torchbearer for the London Olympic Games. He was even cited as an inspiration by Andy Murray after the two met via the television show *Surprise Surprise!*

Arday claimed his writing ability developed rapidly at university, and that he astounded his teachers by progressing from third to first-class grades in one year. "I had to do an oral test on the essay because my lecturer at the time didn't believe I'd done the work," he said of his first high mark. Soon after, he began to set his sights on a career in academia.

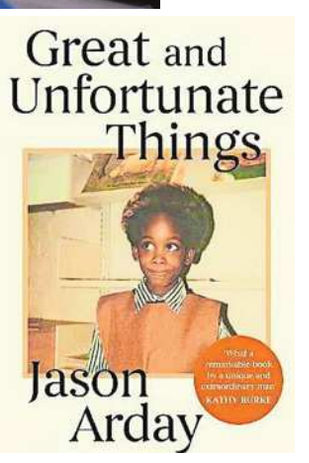
After earning his BA in 2008, Arday completed a master's in education and pedagogy at St Mary's, before enrolling at Liverpool John Moores University and beginning to write sociological papers. "I wasn't a trained sociologist," he said later. "I had a sociological imagination, but I wasn't a sociologist in that sense." In 2015, just 11 years after learning to read and write, he was awarded his PhD. Three years later, he published his first paper. He married his wife, Debbie McKenzie, in 2014. She and their two children survive him.

Arday's academic work focused on issues surrounding race and neurodiversity in education, with the aim of "democratising" higher education. He co-edited academic publications including *Dismantling Race in Higher Education* and *We See Things They'll Never See*, and wrote on British culture in his 2019 book *Cool Britannia and Multi-Ethnic Britain*.

After the publication of his first papers, Arday's academic career progressed at pace. He became a senior lecturer at Roehampton University in 2018, an associate professor of sociology at Durham University in 2019, and a professor of sociology of education at the University of Glasgow in 2022. Aged just 36, he was then one of the UK's youngest professors. In 2023 he was hired by the University of Cambridge.

"It was a strange first day," Arday told one interviewer. "I've had many first days in my professional life, but seldom have I ever had a first day where the entire world was watching me." After his appointment, Arday was named one of the most influential people of the year by The Independent and The Guardian, and the fourth most influential person with a disability in the UK by the Shaw Disability Power 100. He later appeared on BBC's *Question Time* and served as a guest editor of *Today* on Radio 4.

He also received about 200,000 emails from people around the world. While many came from wellwishers, Arday was also sent large amounts of hate mail, and the university was soon forced to begin screening his emails. "It's hard for people to even comprehend or imagine the toll this can take on a person," Arday wrote. The veracity of other incidents he reported, including two occasions on which he was allegedly threatened with a knife on campus, has since been called into question.



In April 2026, Arday used the British Sociological Association's 75th anniversary conference to deliver a talk about conservative "activists" he believed were targeting black professors. Arday claimed that these bad actors trawled through the work of their targets seeking out instances of academic misconduct. "The instruments that are designed to protect academic integrity [...] are weaponised," Arday said. "It's abhorrent, it's a disgrace. And quite frankly, evil." A few months later, the plagiarism allegations against him were made public and he resigned.

After his resignation Arday continued to maintain his innocence. "I am accountable for the mistakes I've made," he told The Times. "What I am not is a liar." For much of the media and the general public, however, the case against Arday was already closed. Although the publication of *Great and Unfortunate Things* went ahead this month, the two live speaking engagements planned around the book's release were quietly cancelled. Having spent 11 years learning to talk, and another 20 getting his voice heard in academia's loftiest halls, Arday returned, reluctantly, to silence.

Jason Arday, academic, was born on May 9, 1985. He died of undisclosed causes on August 14, 2026, aged 41

Register

Professor Sir Roy Goode KC

Commercial lawyer who safeguarded the retirement funds of millions of British workers after the Robert Maxwell scandal

When Robert Maxwell fell from the Lady Ghislaine, his luxury yacht, off the Canary Islands on November 5, 1991, he took with him the retirement dreams of more than 30,000 people. Overnight the subject of pensions, and how to protect them, became a political issue.

Step forward Roy Goode, professor of English law at the University of Oxford and one of the sharpest legal minds of his generation.

Known for his clarity and intellectual rigour, Goode was tasked with chairing a ten-member pension law review that would propose legislation to tighten up regulation ensuring that, even if funds were raided in the future by disreputable employers, pensioners would not end their days in poverty.

It was a monumental task: 8,000 questionnaires were mailed; lawyers, employers and unions were consulted; and public meetings were attended by hundreds of people. "Our role was basically to listen while people described good or bad experiences they had had," he told The Times in September 1993 when delivering his report to Peter Lilley, the social security secretary.

Opinions differed on matters such as pension fund surpluses. Did they belong to employers in the same way that deficits were their responsibility? Or should they be used to give pensioners a more comfortable retirement? However, a consensus did emerge that a single, well-equipped regulator was needed.

Goode was no stranger to public inquiries, having served on the Crowther committee whose 1971 report led to an overhaul of consumer credit legislation and the Consumer Credit Act of 1974. On that occasion he had been reluctant to take part, having just been offered a year's research leave at Yale. However, according to Sir Ross Cranston, professor of law at the London School of Economics, "he thought it was better to take the opportunity of reforming the law rather than simply researching it from outside".

At Goode's suggestion, the Crowther committee chose not to tinker with existing regulation but instead proposed root-and-branch reform. Lenders would be required to state the effective rate of interest, individuals would be protected from oppressive contracts and harsh enforcement measures, and mortgage and credit card lending would be regulated more tightly. Among the outcomes was "section 75" protection, which in many circumstances makes a credit card issuer responsible if something goes wrong with a purchase.

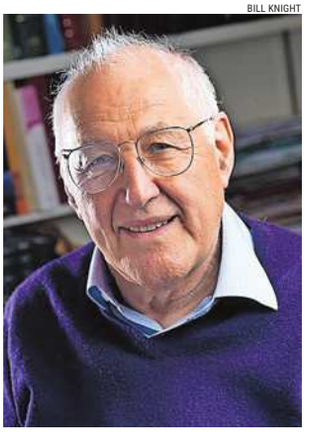
Goode himself was not immune to the vagaries of the banking world. In 1998 he was one of many investors who lost out when Northern Rock restructured its postal accounts.

The 1,000-page Goode report made 218 recommendations and led to the Pensions Act 1995, which established the Occupational Pensions Regulatory Authority (since replaced by the Pensions Regulator). It also set minimum funding levels for pensions, a compensation scheme for when things go wrong and greater member involvement in their running.

The Times declared that 'the government should listen' to the professor

The Times welcomed his proposals, declaring in a leading article: "The government should listen to Professor Goode." Elsewhere the paper pointed out that he was walking a tightrope. To some his report created onerous burdens on businesses; to others it was, in the words of one headline, "not Goode enough", prompting fears that "greedy bosses will continue to dip into pension schemes quite legally".

BILL KNIGHT



Goode was undeterred by criticism

Goode remained sanguine. "I think you can't allow yourself to be too much troubled by criticism as long as you have done an honest job," he said.

Royston Miles Goode was born into a Jewish family in Portsmouth in 1933, the son of Samuel Goode, a naval outfitter, and his wife, Bloom (née Zeid), a saleswoman. He had a half-brother, Geoffrey, who died at a young age. As a boy he played chess for Hampshire. During the war the family lived in north London, where he acquired an interest in commercial law by reading books in the Highgate School library.

He left at 16 to take articles with a solicitors' firm in Portsmouth, sitting his Law Society exams and LLB by correspondence, and qualified as a solicitor in 1955. While he was working for a succession of regional firms, his thoughts turned to writing. He considered various topics, including abandonment, alluvion and divorce, eventually settling on hire-purchase law, about which little had been written for 20 years. *Hire-Purchase Law and Practice* (1962), the first of many books, was followed by *Commercial Law* (1982), *Legal Problems of Credit and Security* (also 1982) and *Principles of Corporate Insolvency Law* (1990), many of which have run to several editions.

Moving to London in 1960, he joined Victor Mishcon & Co (now Mishcon de Reya), specialising in commercial contracts and becoming a partner in 1966. He had met Catherine Rueff, a secretary, at a party and they married in 1964 after a whirlwind romance. She survives him with their daughter, Naomi, a lawyer turned psychotherapist.

Attending a series of evening seminars at Queen Mary College (now Queen Mary University of London) piqued his interest in academic law. Despite never having been to university, he was appointed professor of law there in 1971 while continuing as a consultant for Mishcon. Nine years later he founded QMC's Centre for Commercial Law Studies, putting into practice his idea that commercial law would advance most powerfully when academics and practitioners worked side by side.

Relatively late in his career Goode became a barrister. He was called to the Bar in 1988 and two years later took silk. Around that time, he left QMC to be Norton Rose professor of English law at the University of Oxford. He was also a member of the Monopolies and Mergers Commission (1981-86), the legal reform charity Justice, and Unidroit, which works to harmonise international commercial law. Through that he contributed to the Cape Town Convention, which facilitates security for lenders over mobile equipment such as aircraft, trains and spacecraft. Closer to home, he was chairman of Camden Citizens Advice Bureau.

He collected old maps, enjoyed fine wine and continued to play chess, earning himself a mention in *Chess Combination as a Fine Art* (1972). He remained active, applauding the work of the Metropolitan Police and the BBC in The Times. He also had a sense of mischief. His family recalled that his favourite joke was: "How do you tell the health of a lawyer? Look at their mouth. If it's shut they're dead."

Goode often raised funds for pro bono causes or to support university chairs. Indeed, as Lord Bingham of Cornhill, then lord chief justice, wrote in a festschrift published in 1997, Goode's career was remarkable not only for his scholarly output and ability to make things happen, but also for "his remarkable gift for inducing the wealthy to appreciate that the charitable cause to which, of all others, they would like to give money, is that for which Roy is soliciting donations".

Professor Sir Roy Goode KC, lawyer and academic, was born on April 6, 1933. He died from heart failure on June 24, 2026, aged 93

Sheila Mathews

Actress in Crossroads and West End star who jilted a conman 'at the altar' and survived a Luftwaffe attack on a haystack

Sheila Mathews had not long joined the ITV soap opera *Crossroads* as Laura Marshall, the glamorous girlfriend of Ronnie Allen's David Hunter, the motel manager, when they were seen sweeping a chimney. The plan was for a shower of soot to fall on them, introducing a note of comedy. The pair knew what was to happen, but neither was prepared for the enormous amount of soot, oil and black paint that covered them from head to toe. "Two make-up girls had to work on them for a couple of hours," Noele Gordon, who played Meg Mortimer, the motel owner, wrote in *My Life at Crossroads* (1975).

Mathews, who also appeared on *The Good Old Days*, had fond memories of *Crossroads*. "We recorded four episodes a week and you had to go home and learn your lines every night," she said. "Everything had to be done quickly. There was no time to say, 'Sorry, I've fluffed my line, can we do that again?'"

She was often seen in the West End, stepping in for Lauren Bacall in the musical *Applause* in 1973. She played Blanche DuBois in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, appeared with Michael Denison and Dulcie Gray in Noël Coward's *A Song at Twilight* and "never laughed so much" as when she did a hoedown with Eric Morecambe in *Strike a New Note*.

For a time she was Anna Neagle's understudy in *Charlie Girl* at the Adelphi Theatre while also appearing in *Late Joys* at the Players' Theatre. This meant arriving at the Adelphi, putting her hair in rollers and doing her make-up. Once Neagle was safely on stage at 7.30pm, she dashed to the Players, removing her rollers for an 8pm entrance. "I had to be an athlete," she said. "In those traffic jams it was too risky to go by taxi."

Mathews started performing as a child and had one of acting's longest careers

Mathews's rollers also made an appearance at a Buckingham Palace garden party. "I bought a new hat but then had my hair cut," she said. "When I put it on for the big day it came right over my face. There was nothing for it but to put some rollers in my hair to hold it up."

Sheila Rita Mathews was born in Edmonton in 1927, the elder daughter of Walter Mathews, a bank clerk, and Reta (née Adamson). On New Year's Eve 1930 she was to burst from a cake at the Grosvenor House Hotel in London at midnight, but was too young to count the bongs. "The chef knocked on the trolley as the 12th stroke sounded and out I came," she recalled. In June 1930 she performed with a group of child dancers known as the Rosebuds and at seven she was chosen to play Charles Laughton's daughter in Alexander Korda's biopic *Rembrandt* (1936).

At the outbreak of war Sheila and her sister Peggy were evacuated to Wisbech in Norfolk. One day they were playing on a haystack in a field when a German aircraft came over. "It spotted us and swooped down so low I could see the pilot's goggles," she recalled. "I have never been so frightened in my life."

Returning to London in 1944 as a 17-year-old, blue-eyed, blonde soubrette, she was seen in the musical *Happy and Glorious* with Tommy Trinder at the Palladium. "Every time I got on to the stage in my top hat and tails, the air raid sirens would go off," she added. She returned there in Frankie Howerd's revue *Out of This World*.

In 1948 Mathews became engaged to Peter Waring, a comedian, illusionist and con artist known as John Peter Roderick-Mainwaring. He had invented an elaborate backstory as a decorated naval commander. However, her suspicious father discovered that he had a host of creditors, including a former wife to whom he owed alimony.

Despite her fiancé's bankruptcy their wedding was set for March 17, 1949, with Matthews coming from Manchester, where she was principal boy in *Dick Whittington*. They failed to arrive at Marylebone register office at 11am as planned and the ceremony was postponed for a few hours, apparently because of a hitch concerning the hyphen in his name. Guests waited nearby while the couple argued at his mews flat. Eventually she emerged to say the nuptials were off. Four months later Waring hanged himself in Pentonville prison after being jailed for obtaining money by false pretences.

Shaken by all this, Matthews fled to the US. She "got married [to Bill Bender, an American singer], did some cabaret and watched a tremendous amount of television". The marriage was dissolved and in 1955 she returned to find commercial television just starting. "I auditioned and was signed up for my own light entertainment show, *Friday's Girl*," she said.

She had known Charles Reading, a writer and director known as "Mr Palladium" for his work at the theatre, from performing together in Blackpool some years earlier. They were married in 1957 and he joined Scottish Television, directing her in *The One O'Clock Gang*, a daily programme of sketches, songs and comedy. She continued working through her first pregnancy and their daughter was seen on television within hours of her birth, causing as much consternation as rejoicing among viewers. She stepped back from performing in 1990 to nurse Reading through ill health. He died in 1999 and she is survived by their daughters, Sally and Jane.

In 2002 Mathews told the Daily Mail that she was writing a volume of tell-all memoirs in which she would reveal that one of her former suitors was the actor Robin Hunter, married for 37 years to the *Coronation Street* star Amanda Barrie. "Amanda once invited me to join her and Robin in a threesome, but I told her that wasn't my scene," she said, adding of her still unpublished book: "I'm putting it all in."

Sheila Mathews, actress, was born on May 31, 1927. She died on August 11, 2026, aged 99

Law Report

Doctrine of issue estoppel kept within narrow limits

Supreme Court
Published on August 17, 2026

Skatteforvaltningen v MCML Ltd (formerly ED&F Man Capital Markets Ltd)

Before Lord Sales DP, Lord Lloyd-Jones, Lady Rose, Lady Simler and Lord Doherty
[2026] UKSC 19
Judgment July 1, 2026

The doctrine of issue estoppel (barring a court from rehearing a previously decided issue) related to facts that were fundamental or necessarily had to be established, together with the legal quality of those particular facts, and was to be preserved within narrow limits. It should not be confused with either the doctrine of precedent or the wider law on abuse of process.

The Supreme Court so held when allowing an appeal by the claimant, Skatteforvaltningen (the Danish Customs and Tax Administration), against a decision of the Court of Appeal ([2025] EWCA Civ 371; [2025] 4 WLR 52) to strike out its claim against the defendant, MCML Ltd, for recovery of Danish withholding tax refunds it had paid to, or at the direction of, the defendant due to fraudulent misrepresentations made to the claimant.

The Court of Appeal struck that claim out on the basis that it was barred by an issue estoppel arising from the decision in earlier proceedings of Mr Justice Andrew Baker ([2021] EWHC 974 (Comm); [2021] 1 WLR 4237) whereby he had held, as a preliminary issue, that a similar claim brought against the defendant but alleging negligent misrepresentations was inadmissible in the English jurisdiction under the common law rule, restated as "Dicey rule 3", that English courts had no jurisdiction to consider an action for the enforcement of a penal, revenue or other public law of a foreign state ("the revenue rule").

In so deciding, the Court of Appeal allowed an appeal by the defendant against the decision of Mr Justice Bright ([2024] EWHC 148 (Comm)), dismissing its application for the later claim to be struck out as either being barred by issue estoppel or as an abuse of process.

Lord Pannick KC, **Charles Graham KC**, and **KV Krishnaprasad** for the claimant; **Ali Malek KC**, **Adam Temple** and **John Yap** for the defendant.

LORD SALES DP and LORD DOHERTY, with whom the other members of the court agreed, said that issue estoppel had the potential effect of restricting or denying a litigant's access to court to vindicate an otherwise good claim or of preventing a litigant from raising what was otherwise a good defence to a claim. Where applicable, it had the powerful effect of involving a serious interference with the ordinary entitlement of litigants to present their claims and to defend themselves according to a proper understanding of their legal rights.

Being conscious of that position, and also of the availability of and scope of the doctrine of abuse of process as a flexible mechanism to accommodate the private and public interests involved in the conduct of successive rounds of litigation, the courts had been astute to ensure that issue estoppel was kept within the narrow limits appropriate for such a doctrine.

There was no sound reason to give it as wide an ambit as the doctrine of precedent, under which an appellate court's ruling on a particular point of law was binding on other courts, because they had different legal effects. A litigant was entitled to seek to distinguish a precedent or persuade an appropriate court to overrule it in the interests of justice, which was not a possibility generally available to a party bound by an issue estoppel. (The "special circumstances" exception in *Arnold v National Westminster Bank plc* ([1991] 2 AC 93; The Times, 26 April 1991); was narrow in scope.)

A number of legal principles relating to issue estoppel were well established. First, the issue determined in prior proceedings must have been necessary and fundamental to the earlier decision to give rise to an issue estoppel. Second, the reason there could be no appeal against the finding of the judge was that appeals to the Court of Appeal were ordinarily against orders, not findings made or the reasons given. Third, whether an issue arose on the parties' pleadings in the prior proceedings was critical in deciding whether its determination was necessary and fundamental. Fourth, the immediate foundation of the ultimate decision might give rise to an issue estoppel but the elements of the prior court's reasoning leading up to it could not.

The essential point was that an issue estoppel had a very narrow focus. It was concerned with the facts considered to be fundamental or ultimate (in the sense that they necessarily had to be established to make good the cause of action being alleged or a defence put forward) and the legal quality of those particular facts.

A key reason why the scope of an issue estoppel, which was a matter of substantive law, was limited to the immediate foundation of a decision was that it would be potentially unjust for a party to be prevented by elements of judicial reasoning which went wider than necessary for the prior court to determine the particular case before it. As a practical consideration, the time and effort a party could reasonably be expected to expend on litigation depended on its context and the value and importance of particular points arising in relation to it.

The strength of those considerations was supported by the law on abuse of process, first established in *Henderson v Henderson* ((1843) 3 Hare 100) and explained in *Virgin Atlantic Airways Ltd v Zodiac Seats UK Ltd* ([2013] UKSC 46; [2014] AC 160), as a distinct aspect of the law of *res judicata* (claims or issues which had already been determined) which controlled unfairness between litigants, and which prevented a litigant who failed to raise a point in a first set of proceedings from then seeking to raise it in later proceedings. The law on abuse of process was carefully modulated to balance the equities between the litigants in that sort of situation to obtain overall justice between them.

To expand the ambit of issue estoppel would also displace the operation of the doctrine of precedent in an inappropriate manner. The interpretive process for identifying the *ratio decidendi* (reason for decision) of a case for the purposes of that doctrine was a different interpretive process to that applied to identifying the immediate foundation of a decision for the purposes of issue estoppel. The coherence of the law and the proper application of the doctrine of precedent would be undermined by conflating the two.

Over-extensive application of the doctrine of issue estoppel, beyond what was strictly required to do justice between litigants would undermine the balance struck more generally in the public interest, and taking account of the private interests of the parties, by the doctrine of precedent. The narrow operation of the doctrine of issue estoppel had long been recognised and its scope was not to be enlarged by inference, deduction or argument from the prior decision. An issue estoppel arising from a decision on one set of facts could not be expanded to cover another set of facts, even if the factual differences were not material in law to the earlier decision.

Applying that approach to the present case, the dispute in the first claim had concerned the question of whether the defendant had made negligent misstatements to the claimant and, if so, whether they came within the scope of the revenue rule. The court had to determine the legal quality (namely the effect in law) of those negligent misstatements.

However, the later claim concerned the question of whether the misstatements by the defendant had been made fraudulently, which introduced factual matters not previously in issue, and, if so, whether they came within the scope of the revenue rule, which similarly involved a determination of the legal quality of those fraudulent misstatements.

The majority of the Court of Appeal had formulated the relevant issue as being whether private law claims to recover withholding tax refunds paid out by the defendant based on applications conveying misinformation amounted to enforcement of a foreign revenue law. To treat that issue as giving rise to an issue estoppel would be inconsistent with the true principles of issue estoppel. The Court of Appeal fell into error in doing so because that issue had not been necessary or fundamental to, or the immediate foundation of, the decision of Mr Justice Andrew Baker in the earlier claim.

Solicitors: **Pinsent Masons LLP**; **Rosenblatt Law Ltd**.

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THE TIMES

Births, Marriages and Deaths

To book a Birth, Marriage or Death announcement in the Register, visit: newsukadvertising.co.uk for help, please call 020 7782 7553 or email BMDs@thetimes.co.uk

DEATH and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof. Proverbs 18.21 (AV)

Bible verses are provided by the Bible Society

Births

JACKSON on 25th July 2026 to Ellie (née Whiting) and Sam, a son, Kit Samuel, brother to Sonny, grandson, great-grandson, and great-great-grandson to Betty Wilson (106)

WOOLSTON on 12th August 2026 to Jessica (née McCreedy-Evans) and Ashley, a son, Raife Woody Woolston. A beautiful long-awaited son. First grandchild for both families.

Deaths

HAUGHTON Anna Katherine Harvey (née Moore) died peacefully on 9th August 2026, aged 89. Adored wife of Brian, much-loved mother to Giles and Emma Jane, and grandmother to Amber, Isabella, Mathilda, Isla and Christopher (Kit). Anna will be lovingly remembered by all who knew her.

MACONOCHIE Elizabeth Marguerite Delme died peacefully on 28th June 2026, aged 97. Daughter of the late Dr ERD Maconochie and Mrs CM Maconochie of Maidenhead, Berkshire.

MARSH Paddy (Patrick) died peacefully on 16th July 2026, aged 98. Loving husband of Ann, dearest father of Sally, William and Jane, adored grandpa of Rebecca, Sam, Nico, Ellie, Daniel, Charlie, Jamie, Lucy and Anna, and great-grandpa of Owen, Bobbie, Luke and William. A life fully and faithfully lived. He will be greatly missed.

REID Angela Margaret (née Kinstley) 1936-2026. Died peacefully at home on Wednesday 8th July. A devoted wife to Ian (d.2015) and mother to sons Alexander and Julian.

Court Circular

St James's Palace
15th August, 2026
The Duke of Edinburgh, Patron, Edinburgh International Festival, this morning attended a performance of *Death of Gesualdo* at The Queen's Hall, 85-89 Clerk Street, Edinburgh.

The Duke of Edinburgh, Patron, Edinburgh International Festival, and The Duchess of Edinburgh this evening attended a performance of *Beethoven 6 and Adès* at Usher Hall, Lothian Road, Edinburgh.

St James's Palace
15th August, 2026
Today is the Anniversary of the Birthday of The Princess Royal.

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Experience a husky safari through pristine landscapes

Day 4 **Saariselkä ★Santa Claus Village, glass igloo stay & Reindeer Safari★**
Travel north through Lapland and visit the Arctic Circle

Day 5 **Saariselkä to Kirkenes**
Visit the SIIDA museum, Kirkenes Snow Hotel and enjoy a King Crab experience

Day 6 **Kirkenes, Norway**
Embark your ***Hurtigruten Coastal Ship*** and head south

Day 7 **Tromsø - Hammerfest and Arctic ports**

Day 8 **Svolvær - Lofoten, Vesterålen and the Trollfjord**
Sail through Lofoten's dramatic islands

Day 9 **Brønnøysund - Helgeland Coast and the Arctic Circle**
Cross the Arctic Circle and sail the Helgeland coast

Day 10 **Trondheim and Coastal traditions**
Historic Trondheim and Norway's fishing heritage

Day 11 **Bergen, Norway ★City Tour★**
Conclude your voyage in Bergen

Day 12 **Norway in a Nutshell to Flåm**
Bergen to Flåm through fjord and mountain landscapes

Day 13 **★Flåm Railway to Oslo★**
Ride the Flåm Railway and continue to Norway's capital

Day 14 **Oslo, Norway**
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Weather

Today Some warm spells of sunshine, otherwise it will be cloudy with rain in places. Max 27C (81F), min 9C (48F)

Around Britain

Key: b=bright, c=cloud, d=drizzle, pc=partly cloudy du=dull, f=fair, fg=fog, h=hail, m=mist, r=rain, sh=showers, sl=sleet, sn=snow, s=sun, t=thunder *=previous day **=data not available

	Temp C midday yesterday		Rain mm 24 hrs to 5pm yesterday	Sun hr*
Aberdeen	16	C	1.0	3.7
Aberporth	18	S	0.0	8.5
Anglesey	18	C	0.0	7.5
Aviemore	16	C	0.8	2.4
Barnstaple	21	R	0.0	**
Bedford	22	C	0.0	**
Belfast	16	D	2.0	0.0
Birmingham	22	PC	0.0	**
Bournemouth	23	C	0.0	10.5
Bridlington	16	C	0.2	**
Bristol	23	S	0.0	7.6
Camborne	20	PC	0.0	11.8
Cardiff	21	S	**	6.7
Edinburgh	16	R	0.6	6.2
Eskdalemuir	15	C	0.4	1.4
Glasgow	14	D	5.2	2.7
Hereford	22	S	0.0	**
Herstmonceux	25	C	0.0	7.5
Ipswich	23	PC	0.0	2.2
Isle of Man	17	C	0.6	4.1
Isle of Wight	24	PC	0.0	**
Jersey	24	S	0.0	10.5
Keswick	17	C	0.2	**
Kinloss	16	**	0.0	3.2
Leeds	17	C	0.0	**
Lerwick	11	D	0.0	0.0
Leuchars	17	C	0.4	6.5
Lincoln	19	C	0.0	7.9
Liverpool	19	C	0.0	**
London	24	C	0.0	8.7
Lyneham	21	S	0.0	9.2
Manchester	19	C	0.0	5.2
Margate	22	C	0.0	5.8
Milford Haven	22	PC	0.0	**
Newcastle	17	R	0.0	**
Nottingham	20	PC	0.0	5.9
Orkney	15	R	2.8	**
Oxford	22	C	0.0	**
Plymouth	25	S	0.0	**
Portland	21	C	0.0	**
Scilly, St Mary's	21	PC	0.0	**
Shoreham	25	C	0.0	4.9
Shrewsbury	20	PC	0.0	4.7
Snowdonia	17	PC	0.0	**
Southend	22	C	0.0	8.5
South Uist	**	**	0.0	**
Stornoway	14	C	2.0	0.8
Tiree	14	D	2.8	0.3
Whitehaven	14	C	0.2	5.1
Wick	**	C	0.0	**
Yeovilton	24	S	0.0	10.2

The world

All readings local midday yesterday

Alicante	36	S	Madeira	26	PC
Amsterdam	22	B	Madrid	27	**
Athens	27	PC	Malaga	29	S
Auckland	16	PC	Mallorca	34	PC
Bahrain	44	S	Malta	33	PC
Bangkok	32	PC	Melbourne	13	DU
Barbados	31	PC	Mexico City	26	PC
Barcelona	32	PC	Miami	34	PC
Beijing	25	S	Milan	33	S
Beirut	**	**	Mombasa	24	R
Belgrade	31	S	Montreal	23	B
Berlin	34	S	Moscow	18	S
Bermuda	27	SH	Mumbai	28	M
Bordeaux	29	PC	Munich	32	S
Brussels	26	S	Nairobi	21	B
Bucharest	28	S	Naples	34	S
Budapest	31	S	New Orleans	33	PC
Buenos Aires	12	D	New York	27	B
Cairo	33	S	Nice	32	PC
Calcutta	32	**	Nicosia	36	PC
Canberra	13	B	Oslo	21	S
Cape Town	16	PC	Paris	30	S
Chicago	26	B	Perth	21	S
Copenhagen	26	PC	Prague	31	S
Corfu	31	PC	Reykjavik	12	PC
Delhi	33	**	Riga	26	S
Dubai	39	PC	Rio de Janeiro	27	B
Dublin	19	PC	Riyadh	45	S
Faro	24	S	Rome	33	S
Florence	37	S	San Francisco	20	B
Frankfurt	36	S	Santiago	16	B
Geneva	33	SH	São Paulo	21	PC
Gibraltar	30	PC	Seoul	28	B
Helsinki	22	S	Seychelles	29	B
Hong Kong	30	PC	Singapore	32	B
Honolulu	**	**	St Petersburg	16	SH
Istanbul	28	PC	Stockholm	26	S
Jerusalem	33	PC	Sydney	15	SH
Johannesburg	16	S	Tel Aviv	33	PC
Kuala Lumpur	33	PC	Tenerife	29	PC
Kyiv	**	**	Tokyo	27	B
Lanzarote	30	PC	Vancouver	23	PC
Las Palmas	29	PC	Venice	31	S
Lima	22	DU	Vienna	33	S
Lisbon	26	B	Warsaw	28	S
Los Angeles	24	PC	Washington	25	R
Luxor	41	S	Zurich	33	S

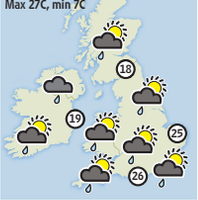
Five days ahead

Unsettled with rather cloudy skies and the risk of showers or longer spells of rain

Tomorrow

Rather cloudy with showery rain and some sunny intervals. Feeling humid over England and Wales.

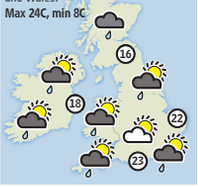
Max 27C, min 7C



Wednesday

Mainly cloudy with showers or longer spells of rain over Scotland and Ireland, heavy at times. Sunny spells and a few isolated showers in England and Wales.

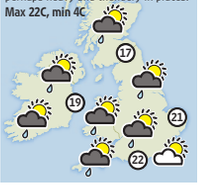
Max 24C, min 8C



Thursday

Mainly dry with sunny spells in southeastern England and the far north of Scotland. Rather cloudy elsewhere with scattered showers, perhaps heavy and thundery in places.

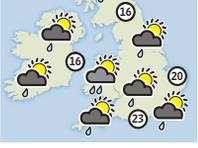
Max 22C, min 4C



Friday

Sunny spells and a scattering of showers, heavy and perhaps thundery at times.

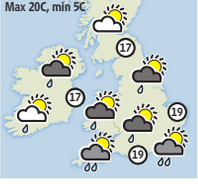
Max 23C, min 5C



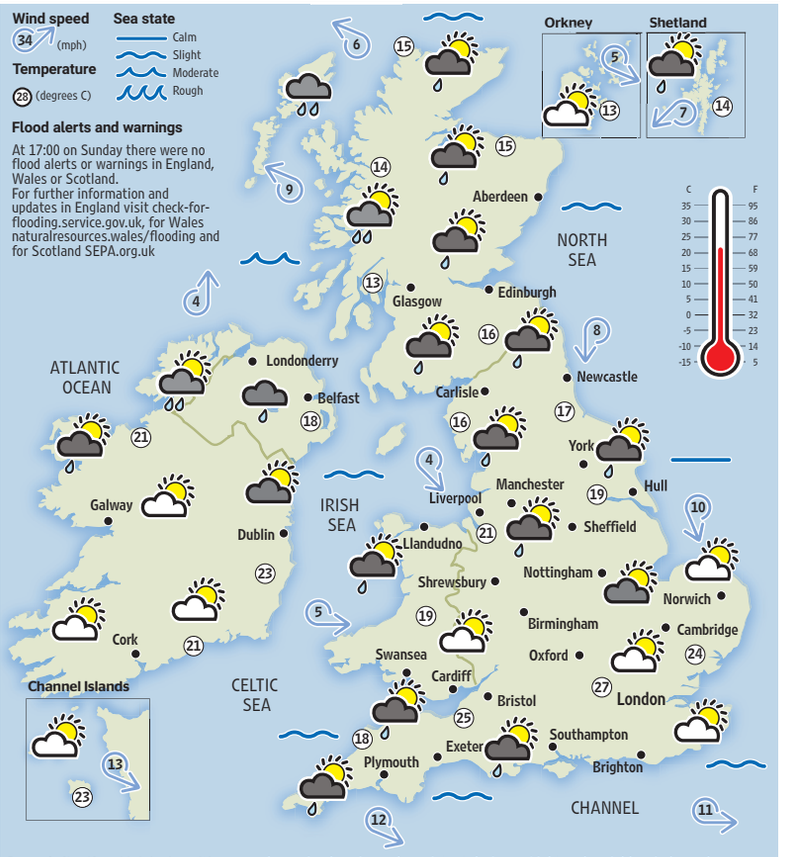
Saturday

Sunny spells and a scattering of showers in England and Wales, perhaps heavy at times. Mainly dry over Scotland and Ireland with sunny spells.

Max 20C, min 5C



The Times weather page is provided by WeatherQuest



Flood alerts and warnings

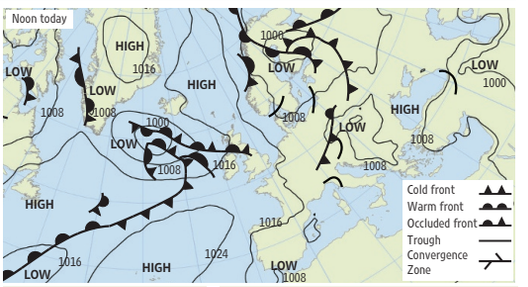
At 17:00 on Sunday there were no flood alerts or warnings in England, Wales or Scotland.
For further information and updates in England visit check-for-flooding.service.gov.uk, for Wales naturalresources.wales/flooding and for Scotland SEPA.org.uk

General situation: Mainly dry with sunny spells over southern Britain and the south of Ireland, but increasing amounts of cloud and rain elsewhere.
Republic of Ireland, N Ireland: Dry with sunny spells over southern areas but cloudy with outbreaks of rain in the north. Light to moderate west or southwesterly winds. Maximum 24C (75F), minimum 13C (55F).
SW Scotland, Lake District, Glasgow, IoM, Argyll: Mostly cloudy with showery light rain in the morning, becoming heavier and persistent during the afternoon. Light and variable winds. Maximum 19C (66F), minimum 13C (55F).
Moray Firth, Aberdeen, NE Scotland, N Isles: Mainly dry with sunny spells and a few isolated showers. Light and variable winds. Maximum 16C (61F), minimum 11C (52F).
SE Eng, Cen S Eng, SW Eng, S Wales, Midlands, E Anglia, London, Channel Is: Mainly dry with sunny spells but the risk of a few isolated light showers. Light and variable winds, perhaps moderate in southwestern England and the Channel Islands. Maximum 27C (81F), minimum 15C (59F).
N Wales, NW Eng, Cen N Eng, E Eng, Borders, Edinburgh and Dundee, NE Eng, NW Scotland, Cen Highland: Some sunny intervals in the morning with light showers but cloud will increase during the afternoon with outbreaks of heavier rain. Light and variable winds. Maximum 21C (70F), minimum 9C (48F).

Tides

Tidal predictions.
Heights in metres. All times in local time

Today		Ht		Ht
Aberdeen	04:56	4.3	17:30	3.9
Avonmouth	11:07	12.8	23:18	12.7
Belfast	02:46	3.7	15:17	3.1
Cardiff	10:52	11.8	23:05	11.7
Devonport	09:42	5.2	21:47	5.3
Dover	02:46	6.5	15:02	6.7
Dublin	03:06	3.3	15:40	2.9
Falmouth	09:04	5.0	21:17	5.1
Greenock	03:58	3.7	16:40	3.2
Harwich	03:28	4.0	15:37	4.0
Holyhead	01:51	5.7	14:14	5.2
Hull	09:56	7.7	22:25	7.0
Leith	06:20	5.6	18:45	5.2
Liverpool	02:39	9.4	15:00	8.9
London Bridge	05:41	7.1	17:53	7.1
Lowestoft	01:12	2.3	13:09	2.7
Milford Haven	10:02	6.7	22:18	6.7
Morecambe	02:50	9.5	15:11	8.9
Newhaven	02:43	6.6	15:05	6.6
Newquay	08:55	6.6	21:11	6.6
Oban	09:23	3.6	21:32	3.7
Penzance	08:24	5.2	20:41	5.3
Portsmouth	03:03	4.5	15:47	4.6
Shoreham	02:57	6.1	15:19	6.2
Southampton	02:26	4.3	14:27	4.3
Swansea	10:11	9.1	22:24	9.1
Tees	07:21	5.6	19:54	5.2
Weymouth	10:44	2.0	22:48	2.0



Synoptic situation

An area of low pressure centred to the southwest of Iceland will push various fronts eastwards across the British Isles, bringing rather cloudy skies and some longer spells of rain over western Scotland, northwest England and the north of Ireland, but sunny spells and the risk of showers elsewhere. Feeling warm in any sunshine across southern England.

Highs and lows

24hrs to 5pm yesterday

Warmest: Writtle, Essex, 27.2C
Coldest: Aonach Mor, 4.0C
Wettest: Castlederg, Co Tyrone, 6.6mm
Sunniest: Camborne, 11.8hrs*

Sun and moon

For Greenwich
Sun rises: 05.49
Sun sets: 20.19
Moon rises: 11.50
Moon sets: 21.35
First quarter: August 20

Hours of darkness

Aberdeen	21:15-05:11
Belfast	21:21-05:35
Birmingham	20:59-05:25
Cardiff	21:01-05:33
Exeter	21:01-05:36
Glasgow	21:19-05:24
Liverpool	21:06-05:27
London	20:49-05:21
Manchester	21:03-05:24
Newcastle	21:05-05:17
Norwich	20:47-05:12
Penzance	21:07-05:46
Sheffield	21:00-05:21

Weather Eye

Paul Simons

Much of England and Wales is now more like a desert than a familiar green and pleasant land. And if a further reminder was needed of how dessicated the country has become, on August 9 a whirlwind of dust, dry leaves and soil spun up in a topsy-turvy dance across Greenwich Park in London, much to the amazement of onlookers, in a scene somewhat reminiscent of the dust bowl years in the US prairies in the 1930s.

This was a dust devil, which can easily be mistaken for a tornado but is entirely different. These are thermals of warm air rapidly rising from hot ground in calm conditions and sent spinning by a wisp of a breeze, whipping up dust, leaves and other light debris into whirlwinds. In contrast, tornados spin down from above, usually from thunderstorms, and are usually more powerful, although dust devils in the UK can reach wind speeds of 90mph.

In 2025 a dust devil tore around a building site in Manchester city centre, lifting up dust and debris, and in 2005 a caravan park in Exelby, North Yorkshire, was hit by a dust devil that launched umbrellas and chairs into the air and sent them crashing into caravans and parked cars. Injuries from dust devils are rare in the UK, but at a village fair in Cressing near Braintree in Essex a woman was hit on the head by a flying chair.

An intriguing aspect of dust devils is whether they might explain biblical manna from heaven. Clumps of straw, hay or grass are easily swept up in these whirlwinds and sent flying sometimes for miles around until eventually the clouds of vegetation fall to earth, appearing to descend from a clear sky as if by some supernatural force.

Even stranger was in 1977, when Alfred Wilson Osborne and his wife were walking home in Bristol and suddenly hazelnuts rained down on them, bouncing off cars and the road. "They were coming from ... a considerable height," Wilson Osborne told the Bristol Evening Post, adding: "They're sweet, fresh, quite delicious."

Speak directly to one of our forecasters on 09065 777675

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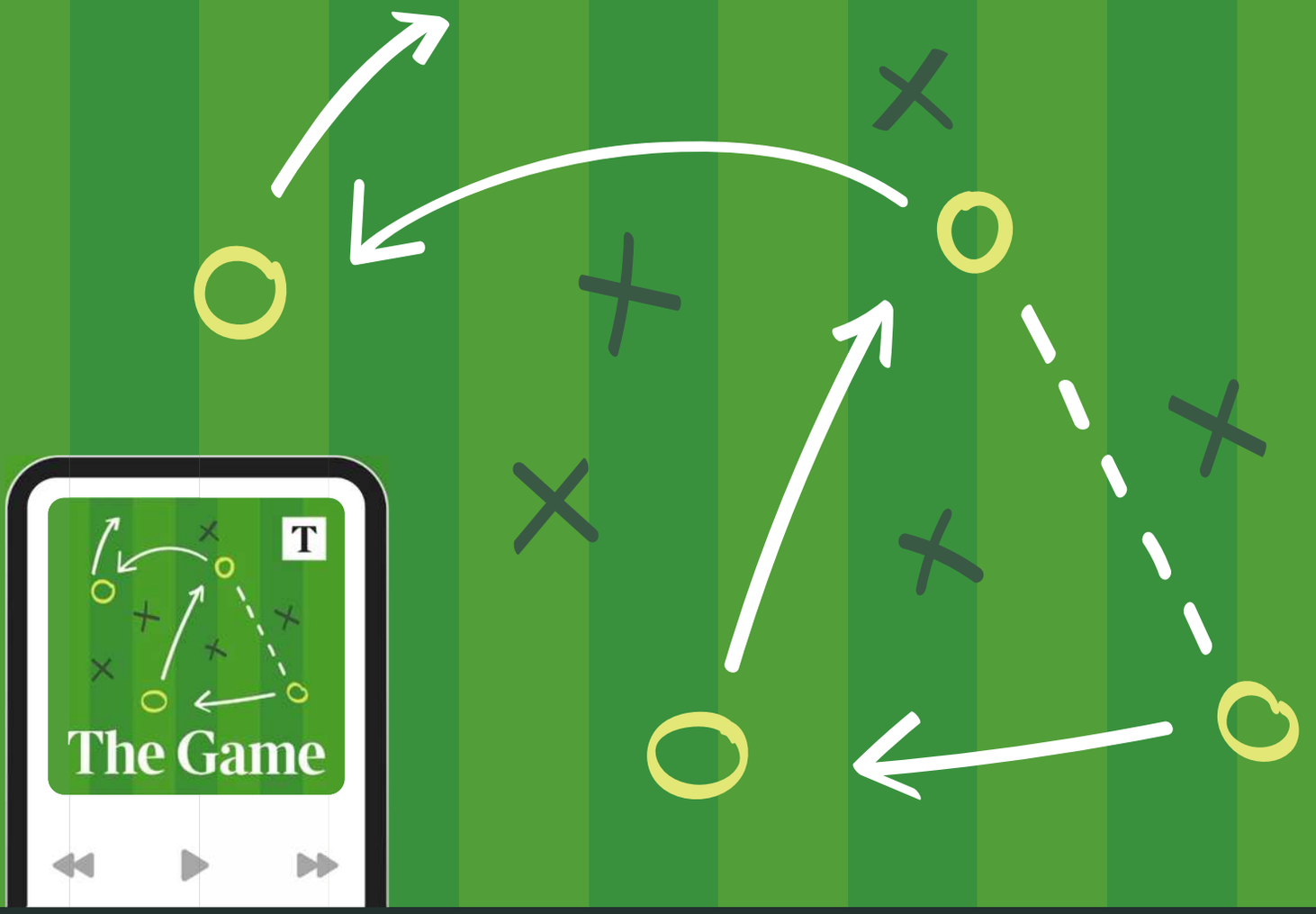

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Sport

New Zealand's hopes rest on Jordan

Stuart Barnes says wing with All Blacks strike rate of 0.89 tries per game will be a danger for South Africa

Maybe not a miracle, but it is going to take something rather special for New Zealand to beat South Africa on Saturday. Not whispered prayers, but four props to withstand the Springbok scrum for the best part of 80 minutes. Who needs the Lord when the All Blacks have their own, in the stretched shape of the second-row Josh Lord?

As for South Africa, whatever they do, Rassie Erasmus's detailed preparation will not overlook Will Jordan. By any computation he is one of the greatest tryscorers in the history of the sport. In 57 Test matches he has scored 51 tries — an average strike rate of 0.89 tries a game. This is a phenomenal record. It is even more so considering neither of the previous managers, Ian Foster nor Scott Robertson presided over vintage All Black squads.

The early signs — in terms of how they play and the mood of the players — are optimistic. It was the word the manager and his team were drip-feeding to the general public to describe Dave Rennie's first three internationals in July. "Optimistic". They have a right to claim this word as their own. Who needs a miracle when Jordan is ripping defences apart from — in all probability — the right wing?

Originally a full back, Jordan eventually moved to the wing, where he is a more dangerous threat than he used to be, running back counterattack ball from clearance kicks. To wear the No 15 jersey is to be the initiator. Wingers, in particular, thrive off the full back. Even Jordan doesn't have quite the change of pace and the swinging hips of Christian Cullen in the early days of the Paekakariki Express.

Cullen would have scored a lot more than 46 tries in 58 games had New Zealand not made the mistake of moving him to centre in and around the 1999 World Cup. Not for the first or last time, managers misconstrued the merits of quantity over quality of ball in hand. As a centre it is all well and good receiving more passes, but the lack of space in the midfield counters the sheer quantity of ball.

Countering from full back, à la Serge Blanco or Cullen himself, there was once room to roam. Yet defensive systems are far more refined than in the last days of amateurism and the early age of professionalism when kick-chase was a ten-minute afterthought at the end of training. It's now not often a full back glides past the first wave of tacklers. The kicking game is predominantly high rather than long. Full backs tend to receive kicks with time to make the decision whether to run or clear their lines, predominantly in their 22. Few teams have the temerity to risk running the ball back from the shadow of their own posts.

Jordan can be a superb full back but he was wasted at No 15. To deadliest effect, he is not a creator but a finisher. And there's no better country in which to be a finisher than New Zealand, especially when the All Blacks rediscover their rhythm. At full time against the Bulls, the South African cameras cut to a close up of the fly half, Ruben Love, with Jordan standing next to him. It told an apposite tale of the sport's changes at the elite end. Wings, New Zealand style, are more immersed in midfield than traditional back-threes.

Jordan celebrates tries with what looks like a shark's fin gesture, hand on head. Keep an eye out for it. An appropriate celebration. When he gets behind a defence, more often than not, he tears teams apart. It was the same with Cullen. To shift Cullen to centre turned him into an obvious tackling target. To unleash him from the broken field back then was to terrorise defences.

There hasn't been a better attacking full back in the professional era, but the shape of the game has changed. Attacks are tidal. Full backs, second rows and inside centres are regularly the first wave, when it's the third or fourth that catches you out and knocks you off your feet. Those sneaky wingers!

The quality of the All Black distribution is such that any one is capable of delivering the latest possible pass to Jordan, as he runs the planned but utterly disguised angle. When he is through that first line, as often as not, he doesn't come across a second one and, if he does, he tends to dismiss it en route to the tryline.

Jordan was rested on Saturday, but we witnessed a wonderful performance from Leroy Carter on the wing. When he popped up on first-phase moves he eased into space and drew defenders. To be sucked infield by an All Black is to be shredded in the wider channel. All Kiwi wingers time their offensive incursions close to perfection.

When it's Jordan picking that line, what do you do? Against France, in the first round of Nations Championship matches, it was the underestimated outside centre Quinn Tupaea producing the most perfect of passes to leave Damian Penaud stranded, with Jordan coasting outside in cruise control.

In days of excessive defensive organisation and excellence, Jordan bursting impossibly late into what was all but a split second earlier no space at all, is one of the game's quiet perfections.

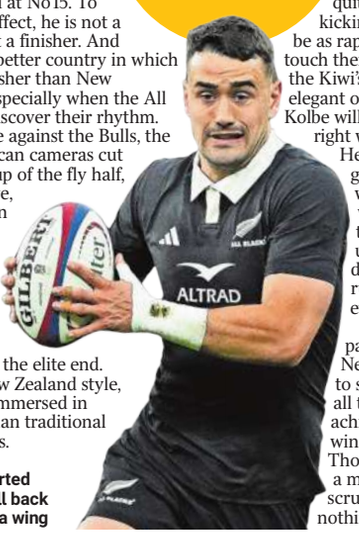
Louis Bielle-Biarrey, of Bordeaux and France, has a similar all-round footballing instinct. After 27 games he has 29 Test tries. He is rewriting the rules of European rugby.

Jordan doesn't have quite the Frenchman's kicking game and may not be as rapid, but for timing and touch there is no one to match the Kiwi's longevity as the most elegant of wide men. Cheslin Kolbe will most likely be on the right wing for South Africa.

He, too, is a great; a great rugby player whereas Jordan — with his exquisite timing — is, unarguably, one of the deadliest finishers rugby union has ever had.

Something close to parity up front gives New Zealand a chance to silence Ellis Park. For all the Springboks' achievements, an away win won't be a miracle. Though it will have to be a masterclass behind the scrum. On Saturday nothing less will suffice.

South Africa v New Zealand
First Test: Ellis Park, Johannesburg, Saturday, 4.10pm
TV: Sky Sports Action



Jordan started out as a full back but is now a wing

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Gullivers sports travel EXPERIENCE IT LIVE
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Windsor
Rob Wright

5.20 South Shore **6.55** Ray Mon Dough
5.55 Fairy Well **7.25** Sisters In The Sky
6.25 Magic Effort **7.55** Guinness Lad

Going: good to firm
Draw: 5f-6f, low numbers best **Sky Sports Racing**

5.20 Handicap (£4,397: 5f) (9 runners)
1 (2) 53112 **SOUTH SHORE** 33 (BF,CD) R Cowell 5-10-0 **C Whiteley (3)**
2 (4) 25300 **KISS AND RUN** 21 (T,BF,CD) R Cook & J Bridger 5-9-12 **M Paetel**
3 (6) 06400 **MUKER** 16 (D) N Tinkler 8-9-12 **A Jary**
4 (8) 42113 **THORNABY PEARL** 9 (D) Adrian Nicholls 8-9-12 **J Dickson (5)**
5 (7) 60351 **TOO DARN GOOD** 21 (P,CD) H Candy 3-9-9 **Taryn Langley (3)**
6 (1) 04112 **SUNLIT SEA** 9 (B,BF,D) Sir M Prescott 3-9-8 **P Scott (7)**
7 (5) 34313 **SO SMART** 24 (P,T,D) G Harris 7-9-6 **Ashley Lewis**
8 (3) -0003 **BELLINI SPIRIT** 15 J & R Flint 3-9-1 **H Burns**
9 (9) 62130 **TRUST SERGEI** 18 (D) G Hanmer 4-9-0 **C Tucker (7)**

9-4 Sunlit Sea, 7-2 South Shore, 5-1 Too Darn Good, 6-1 Thornaby Pearl, 7-1 So Smart, 10-1 Kiss And Run, 20-1 Bellini Spirit, Muker, 25-1 Trust Sergei.

Rob Wright's choice: South Shore is in form and has won both starts at this track **Dangers** Sunlit Sea, Too Darn Good

5.55 Maiden Stakes (2-Y-O: £5,400: 6f) (11)
1 (10) **ARTHUR CARROT** G Boughey 9-7 **R Dawson**
2 (7) 5 **ASTRALITE** 23 Harry Charlton 9-7 **L Edmunds**
3 (5) 03 **HEMUSTBEANANGEL** 23 R Teal 9-7 **O Lewis (5)**
4 (8) 6 **LION OF GOD** 53 M Botti 9-7 **T Marquand**
5 (11) 22 **MITHAALY** 20 (BF) G Boughey 9-7 **B Loughnane**
6 (9) **MOTION CARRIED** S C Williams 9-7 **S M Levey**
7 (3) **NOBELOS** C Hills 9-7 **H Crouch**
8 (1) 0 **BEST YET** 34 R Hughes 9-2 **C Fallon**
9 (2) 42 **FAIRY WELL** 19 J Chapple-Hyam 9-2 **R Ryan**
10 (6) 0060 **TRUST HAVANA** 24 G Hanmer 9-2 **Grace McEntee**
11 (4) 00060 **TRUST IN FAR** 18 G Hanmer 9-2 **C Tucker (7)**

Evens Mithaaly, 11-4 Fairy Well, 8-1 Arthur Carrot, 10-1 Nobelos, 14-1 Astralite, Motion Carried, 25-1 Hemustbeanangel, 33-1 Lion Of God, Best Yet.

Wright choice: Fairy Well is still unexposed; she can build on a fair second at Leicester **Dangers** Mithaaly, Nobelos

6.25 Nursery (2-Y-O: £5,653: 5f) (6)
1 (1) 4150 **SKY SECRET** 17 (D) C Cox 9-10 **R Ryan**
2 (3) 140 **MAGIC EFFORT** 61 (P,D) I Mohammed & J Santos 9-5 **T Marquand**
3 (5) 4100 **ENVISION** 19 (CD) James Owen 9-4 **C Fallon**
4 (6) 55110 **PAPER VIEW** 17 R Hannon 9-2 **S M Levey**
5 (2) 031 **BLACK VELVET BOY** 20 (D) J & S Quinn 9-1 **J Hart**
6 (4) 44 **INCA WARRIOR** 30 N Tinkler 8-4 **A Jary (3)**

6-4 Black Velvet Boy, 4-1 Magic Effort, 5-1 Paper View, 11-2 Sky Secret, 7-1 Envision, 12-1 Inca Warrior.

Wright choice: Magic Effort can bounce back from a below-par effort in the Queen Mary at Ascot **Danger** Envision

6.55 Handicap (£5,653: 6f) (9)
1 (7) -6261 **RAY MON DOUGH** 8 (T,D) Oliver Cole 3-10-3(6ex) **H Crouch**
2 (5) 40030 **RIGHTHERE RIGHTNOW** 37 (P) R Spencer 4-9-8 **G Wood**
3 (3) -1001 **WAISTCOAT** 25 (T,D) R Burdon 5-9-7 **J Mitchell**
4 (1) 24412 **UNDER THE TWILIGHT** 19 (CD) M Blake 8-9-7 **H Davies**
5 (6) 52303 **BUCCABAY** 28 (CD) E J-Houghton 6-9-6 **H Vigors (5)**
6 (4) 33125 **LEQUINTO** 10 (CD) A Carroll 9-9-4 **R Ryan**
7 (2) 0-113 **TENBOB TOMMY** 10 (D) Miss S West 5-9-4 **C Bishop**
8 (9) -0025 **CASHBOX** 19 (B,D) C Hills 3-9-3 **D Egan**
9 (8) 02210 **AMAZONIAN DREAM** 21 (P,BF,CD) B Millman 7-9-3 **L Edmunds**

11-4 Ray Mon Dough, 5-1 Waistcoat, 6-1 Under The Twilight, 7-1 Amazonian Dream, 8-1 Cashbox, Tenbob Tommy, Lequinto, 12-1 others.

Wright choice: Ray Mon Dough was impressive at Leicester; can strike again **Dangers** Tenbob Tommy, Buccabay

7.25 Handicap (£3,768: 6f) (12)
1 (9) 60461 **YES WALIIM** 6 R Hughes 3-9-9 **O Hoodless (7)**
2 (2) 00445 **NZURI** 17 F Brennan 3-9-9 **Rose Dawes (5)**
3 (6) 00012 **MANHATTAN CHUTE** 10 (D) J & S Best 4-9-9 **S M Levey**
4 (8) 0-053 **GEEMANN** 8 J Tickle 3-9-8 **Taylor Fisher**
5 (1) 0-524 **SUNDIATA KEITA** 8 (P,BF) J & R Flint 4-9-7 **W Carson**
6 (11) -6006 **REPORTER** 10 (H,C) S Hodgson 4-9-6 **W Carver**
7 (4) 00541 **CAITLIN G** 15 M Fenton (Ire) 3-9-5 **Grace McEntee**
8 (10) 05321 **JACKIE BROWN** 17 (T,D) A Wintle 6-9-5 **D Egan**
9 (12) 04060 **RAINBOW SORBET** 9 (B) J & S Best 4-9-3 **Ashley Lewis (3)**
10 (7) 34023 **SISTERS IN THE SKY** 17 (P,D) G Harris 7-9-3 **R Ryan**
11 (5) 30432 **SYMBOL OF HOPE** 17 (P,D) G Harris 8-9-3 **R Dawson**
12 (3) 04560 **JUST KING HIGH** 9 (B,T) R Burdon 4-9-2 **T Marquand**

4-1 Yes Waliim, 5-1 Manhattan Chute, 6-1 Caitlin G, 7-1 Jackie Brown, 8-1 Symbol of Hope, Sisters In The Sky, 10-1 Sundiata Keita, 12-1 others.

Wright choice: Sisters In The Sky came out worst in a three-way photograph at Bath **Dangers** Symbol Of Hope, Geemann

7.55 Handicap (£3,768: 1m 3f) (9)
1 (2) 62632 **TROJAN TRUTH** 20 (B,CD) E De Giles 7-9-12 **O Lewis (5)**
2 (1) 00505 **PERSHALLA** 19 (H) A Perrett 4-9-12 **C Fallon**
3 (5) 04066 **SALIKO** 28 (P) Jack Jones 4-9-12 **T Marquand**
4 (3) 52130 **GUINNESS LAD** 28 (H,CD) N Mulholland 6-9-4 **Taylor Fisher**
5 (8) 35213 **HIGHLAND HARVEY** 12 (BF,D) Gihan Arnolda 4-9-4 **R Dawson**
6 (7) 6040/ **MIX DE GRIS** J504 Miss S West 5-9-4 **Rose Dawes (5)**
7 (4) 00000 **JUDGE FRANK** 24 (P,C) J & R Flint 5-8-12 **W Carson**
8 (6) 45332 **RISK AVERSE REBEL** 23 G Hanmer 3-8-11 **Grace McEntee**
9 (9) -0004 **MISTER PRETENTIOUS** 23 L Dace 3-8-4 **Isobelle Chalmers (7)**

3-1 Trojan Truth, 7-2 Risk Averse Rebel, 4-1 Highland Harvey, 6-1 Guinness Lad, 7-1 Saliko, 10-1 Pershalla, 16-1 Judge Frank, 20-1 others.

Wright choice: Guinness Lad was unsuited by a slow pace here last time **Dangers** Risk Averse Rebel, Highland Harvey

Catterick
Rob Wright

2.15 Stellarmasterpiece **3.45** Star Noir
2.45 Harry's Pop **4.15** Staniel Cay
3.15 Barmyblade **4.45** Black Storm

Going: good, good to firm in places
Draw: no advantage **Racing TV**

2.15 Handicap (£3,974: 1m 4f) (7)
1 (5) 00505 **AUSTRIAN THEORY** 23 (P) T Easterby 7-11-2 **T Easterby (3)**
2 (7) 41313 **SUPER HIT** 16 (H,T,BF) James Owen 5-10-13 **H Callan**
3 (1) 00341 **MARINER** 16 (P,T) J Candlish 5-10-11 **J Neild**
4 (2) 00665 **SPANISH HUSTLE** 16 (D) J Goldie 8-10-10 **Miss K Williams (5)**
5 (3) 5-436 **STELLARMASTERPIECE** J29 (P,CD) M Hammond 6-10-9 **Miss B Smith**
6 (6) 02466 **SHAHBAZ** 14 (B,T,D) A Watson 6-10-6 **Miss B Hampson**
7 (4) 05321 **STAR START** 12 R Carr 6-10-3 **Miss C Parker (5)**

11-4 Star Start, 3-1 Mariner, 9-2 Super Hit, 5-1 Stellarmasterpiece, 7-1 Austrian Theory, 10-1 Spanish Hustle, 14-1 Shahbaz.

2.45 Nursery (2-Y-O: £3,664: 6f) (8)
1 (5) 04044 **HARRY'S POP** 14 D Cunha 9-9 **S James**
2 (4) 64453 **AURA OF MELANIA** 21 Roger Fell 9-7 **O McSweeney**
3 (7) 3550 **EEVEE STAR** 24 E Bethell 9-7 **O Orr**
4 (1) 23000 **CHEEKY CHESCA** 16 (P) T Easterby 9-5 **D Allan**
5 (3) 006 **SOLDIER'S ECHO** 28 H Palmer 9-3 **S Gray**
6 (2) 40656 **INVICTA ROSE** 26 Ollie Sangster 8-13 **B Garritty**
7 (8) 0662 **SO TEMPTING** 24 (P) T Ward 8-11 **P J McDonald**
8 (6) 650 **ATHOS** 25 J Butler 8-11 **Joanna Mason**

5-2 So Tempting, 4-1 Harry's Pop, 5-1 Soldier's Echo, 6-1 Aura Of Melania, 8-1 Athos, 10-1 Invicta Rose, Eevee Star, 12-1 Cheeky Chesca.

3.15 Handicap (£3,664: 6f) (9)
1 (6) 01030 **JM JHINGREE** 16 (P) Ewan Whillans 4-9-13 **P J McDonald**
2 (8) 42600 **DAYTONA LADY** 11 (P,D) R Carr 6-9-11 **JP Sullivan**
3 (4) 04123 **GOOD KARMA** 26 (P) J Riches 6-9-10 **E Tindall (5)**
4 (9) 03341 **MISS RAINBOW** 13 (V,CD) T Waggott 5-9-10 **B McHugh**
5 (2) 0-565 **QUERCUS** 33 (P,CD) Mrs A Duffield 9-9-10 **S Gray**
6 (5) 41636 **ONE OF OUR OWN** 31 (P,T,CD) R Menzies 6-9-7 **A Mullen**
7 (3) 21014 **BARMYBLADE** 13 (P,CD) T Easterby 4-9-5 **D Allan**
8 (7) 00053 **EDMOND HALLEY** 7 (BF) E Bethell 4-9-5 **O Orr**
9 (1) 53032 **PAPA DON'T PREACH** 15 (H,BF) K Frost 7-9-4 **W Pyle**

3-1 Papa Don't Preach, 7-2 Miss Rainbow, 4-1 Edmond Halley, 5-1 Good Karma, 10-1 Barmyblade, 12-1 One Of Our Own, Daytona Lady, 16-1 others.

3.45 Novice Stakes (£5,400: 5f) (6)
1 (5) 34-04 **STAR NOIR** 76 (BF) M & D Easterby 3-9-7 **B Garritty**
2 (6) 30-00 **TOP LAD** 38 M & D Easterby 3-9-7 **Joanna Mason**
3 (2) **ROCKTOUN HEART** Miss L Perratt 4-9-4 **P Mulrennan**
4 (4) **MISS TINO** D Thompson 3-9-2 **B McHugh**
5 (1) -4443 **NIGHT SHINING** 14 (T,BF) G Boughey 3-9-2 **P Cosgrave**
6 (3) 43 **PREFERRED** 206 (H) J Tate 3-9-2 **P J McDonald**

5-6 Night Shining, 4-1 Star Noir, 9-2 Preferred, 6-1 Top Lad, 33-1 Miss Tino, Rocktoun Heart.

4.15 Handicap (£4,187: 5f) (11)
1 (8) 33100 **TEES AGGREGATES** 23 (CD) Adrian Nicholls 4-10-0 **J Garritty**
2 (11) 60410 **EMPEROR'S SON** 44 (H,D) Samantha & Jacqueline Coward 5-10-0 **Joanna Mason**
3 (4) 30010 **OUR ABSENT FRIENDS** 3 (CD) T Davidson 8-9-13 **D Allan**
4 (9) -1365 **MISS BRAZEN** 62 (D) M & D Easterby 6-9-13 **B Garritty**
5 (7) 06234 **BETWEENTHESTICKS** 12 (P,CD) R Carr 6-9-12 **JP Sullivan**
6 (2) 15520 **CANARIA QUEEN** 16 (P,D) T Easterby 6-9-12 **D Fentiman**
7 (6) 43255 **BEAUMADIER** 21 (D) M Loughnane 6-9-12 **Hope Regan (7)**
8 (1) -5413 **STANIEL CAY** 96 (BF,D) G Tuer 3-9-8 **O Orr**
9 (10) 42144 **INVINCIBLE CROWN** 14 (D) R Carr 4-9-2 **T Eaves**
10 (5) 02303 **IRISH DANCER** 24 (T,CD) D Carroll 6-9-0 **Z Wheatley**
11 (3) 0-043 **CHEERLEADER** 21 (CD) Miss T Jackson 4-8-12 **A Mullen**

5-1 Staniel Cay, 6-1 Cheerleader, 7-1 Tees Aggregates, Our Absent Friends, 8-1 Betweenthesticks, Beaumadier, 10-1 others.

4.45 Handicap (£4,187: 7f) (10)
1 (8) 0-640 **FOLKENE** 74 (D) Roger Fell 4-10-0 **O McSweeney**
2 (6) 10140 **EVOCATIVE SPARK** 10 (V,CD) J Riches 7-10-0 **E Tindall (5)**
3 (7) 51111 **CLASSY CLARETS** 32 (H,CD) I Jardine 5-9-13 **S Farmer (5)**
4 (3) 51322 **RUNNINSONOFAGUN** 9 (B,BF) T Davidson 4-9-12 **J Garritty**
5 (5) -2612 **CAROLUS MAGNUS** 20 (D) M & D Easterby 8-9-11 **Joanna Mason**
6 (2) 42533 **BLACK STORM** 9 (B,D) K Scott 5-9-10 **O Orr**
7 (10) 04455 **NO RETURN** 44 C Johnston 4-9-10 **P J McDonald**
8 (1) 553-4 **WILLOLARUPI** 31 D Carroll 5-9-9 **Z Wheatley**
9 (4) 53020 **VINCE LE PRINCE** 9 (P,T,CD) T Easterby 6-9-9 **D Allan**
10 (9) 20661 **EMERALD ARMY** 16 (CD) R Carr 5-9-0 **JP Sullivan**

11-4 Classy Clarets, 9-2 Emerald Army, 5-1 Runninsonofagun, 7-1 Carolus Magnus, Black Storm, 10-1 Evocative Spark, 12-1 Folkene, No Return.

Lingfield Park
Rob Wright

2.30 Crazy Cubana (nb) **4.00** Veil Of Clouds
3.00 Itica **4.30** Pure Passion
3.30 Belle Of Kt **5.00** Uzincso

Going: standard
Draw: no advantage **Sky Sports Racing**

2.30 Nursery (2-Y-O: £3,978: 1m) (6)
1 (5) 1030 **CRAZY CUBANA** 18 E Walker 9-9 **K Shoemark**
2 (4) 6152 **POPPY FOXY** 41 (BF) Charlie Clover 9-8 **S Osborne**
3 (3) 43 **PEQUENITA** 39 A Balding 9-8 **O Murphy**
4 (6) 463 **LITTLE MESTER** 10 S C Williams 9-5 **J Doughty**
5 (2) 05232 **PARADING** 20 R Hughes 9-5 **P Dobbs**
6 (1) 45431 **MAGICAL LIFE** 7 (D) J S Moore 8-9(6ex) **W Cox**

15-8 Magical Life, 4-1 Pequenita, Poppy Foxy, 6-1 Parading, 7-1 Crazy Cubana, 8-1 Little Mester.

3.00 Maiden Stakes (£4,320: 1m) (10)
1 (3) 02-5 **ITICA** 209 A Balding 3-9-7 **O Murphy**
2 (7) 3-2 **JUSTICE COURT** 16 (T) J Osborne 3-9-7 **S Osborne**
3 (9) **MARCHMONT** Harry Eustace 3-9-7 **K Shoemark**
4 (8) **NASCONDINO** D & C Kubler 3-9-7 **E Nader**
5 (5) 56 **GALLANT PIONEER** 25 Charlie Pike 3-9-5 **T Greatrex**
6 (4) 0 **INSPECTRE** 25 (H) G & J Moore 3-9-5 **R Hornby**
7 (2) -5025 **RAPIDE VEGA** 48 A Keatley 3-9-5 **MP Sheehy**
8 (6) 0 **LADY BLITZLE** 12 J Channon 3-9-2 **N Currie**
9 (1) **AU POINT** M Bell 3-9-0 **C Shepherd**
10 (10) -0605 **BARBUDA BAY** 16 (B) R Teal 3-9-0 **D Costello**

7-4 Justice Court, 3-1 Itica, 7-2 Rapide Vega, 8-1 Barbuda Bay, 10-1 Marchmont, 20-1 Au Point, Nascondino, 25-1 Gallant Pioneer.

3.30 Handicap (£3,245: 2m) (6)
1 (6) 31111 **BELLE OF KT** 2 (C) J S Moore 5-10-4(10ex) **Millie Wonnacott (5)**
2 (2) 01002 **LE ROUGE CHINOIS** 12 (P,CD) M Appleby 6-9-9 **O Murphy**
3 (4) 0-653 **ANIMATO** J30 (P,T,D) D McCain 7-9-9 **D Costello**
4 (1) 56345 **REGALLY BLONDE** 12 (B,D) B Case 7-9-2 **S Osborne**
5 (5) 24446 **FORNIDO** 12 M Attwater 4-9-2 **N Currie**
6 (3) 25642 **STAR OF JUPITER** 13 (B,E,T) M Loughnane 5-8-13 **R Hornby**

4-5 Belle Of Kt, 3-1 Le Rouge Chinois, 6-1 Star Of Jupiter, 12-1 Regally Blonde, 16-1 Fornido, 20-1 Animato.

4.00 Handicap (£3,978: 6f) (5)
1 (2) 01400 **TRONIDO** 39 (H,C) S Dow 5-9-11 **T Heard**
2 (4) 5253 **VEIL OF CLOUDS** 31 (T,BF) S & E Crisford 3-9-9 **C Shepherd**
3 (5) 23104 **EGOTISTICAL** 52 (BF,D) R Varian 3-9-9 **R Coakley**
4 (1) 02-20 **DARK BRUNETTE** 74 J Chapple-Hyam 3-9-9 **O Murphy**
5 (3) 6-554 **BESSIE WALLIS** 70 (H,C) M Attwater 3-9-4 **S C Cronin (5)**

6-4 Veil Of Clouds, 5-2 Egotistical, 5-1 Dark Brunette, 6-1 Bessie Wallis, 8-1 Tronido.

4.30 Handicap (3-Y-O: £3,245: 5f) (6)
1 (5) 15005 **STAR MARIAN** 14 (B,D) D Loughnane 9-9 **O Murphy**
2 (2) 43012 **PURE PASSION** 4 (D) S C Williams 9-9 **J Doughty**
3 (3) 02050 **DUSK DAMSEL** 27 (B) J S Moore 9-9 **Millie Wonnacott (5)**
4 (4) 400 **MARISELLE** 34 Adam Kirby 9-1 **C Shepherd**
5 (6) 0000 **MIMIME** 13 (P) M Appleby 9-1 **S Osborne**
6 (1) 46603 **SAECULAMATION** 18 G Margarson 9-0 **K Shoemark**

10-11 Pure Passion, 5-2 Saeculamation, 13-2 Star Marian, 8-1 Mariselle, 25-1 Dusk Damsel, 33-1 Mimime.

5.00 Handicap (£3,245: 1m 2f) (8)
1 (6) 6550 **SIX BLUE** 40 R Phillips 6-9-12 **K Shoemark**
2 (3) 56445 **FORCA TIMAO** 82 (H,T) M Pattinson 6-9-12 **A Redman (7)**
3 (7) 4-043 **UZINCSO** 68 (P) J Butler 10-9-11 **MP Sheehy**
4 (1) 20030 **BETA READER** 47 (P) Mrs L Mongan 4-9-8 **Georgia Dobie**
5 (4) 05060 **TWILIGHT GLOW** 32 (P) J Portman 3-9-5 **R Hornby**
6 (8) 32004 **BERGAMO GOLD** 34 (CD) C Johnston 3-9-5 **C Shepherd**
7 (5) 0-664 **BOSTON RUN** 13 S Dow 4-9-4 **O Murphy**
8 (2) -2153 **HOVE RANGER** 48 (BF) G & J Moore 3-8-13 **R Clutterbuck**

2-1 Uzincso, 9-4 Hove Ranger, 9-2 Forca Timao, 8-1 Boston Run, 14-1 Twilight Glow, Bergamo Gold, 16-1 Beta Reader, 25-1 Six Blue.

Wolverhampton
Rob Wright

5.10 Celtic Arrow **7.10 Style King** (nap)
5.40 Halcon **7.40** Rajeteriat
6.10 Menhaal **8.10** Pace Attack
6.40 Rex Regum

Going: standard
Draw: 5f-7f, low numbers best **Sky Sports Racing**

5.10 Handicap (£3,978: 7f) (10)
1 (3) 04551 **SO SASSY** 31 (V,CD) J Fanshawe 4-10-0 **Kaiya Fraser**
2 (10) 00565 **ZIGGY'S QUEEN** 24 (H,T,C,D) R & P Fahey 5-9-11 **H Russell**
3 (4) 45213 **AMELIA'S JOY** 26 (P,CD) M Herrington 4-9-11 **D Probert**
4 (9) 20240 **DREAM ILLUSION** 11 (CD) M Herrington 4-9-10 **D E Hogan**
5 (6) 53263 **HAMALEEL** 31 (B) A Watson 3-9-7 **T Moore (7)**
6 (1) 50061 **ESPANITA** 17 (H,CD) C Johnston 3-9-5 **O Stammers**
7 (5) 34225 **CELTIC ARROW** 16 J Camacho 3-9-5 **R Sexton**
8 (8) 00053 **ANGELS' SHARE** 17 (D) W Knight 3-9-4 **M Ghiani**
9 (7) -6002 **REDREDROBIN** 12 (P,D) M Saunders 9-9-3 **E Greatrex**
10 (2) 26010 **SOUTH COAST STAR** 45 (CD) H Palmer 3-9-1 **R Havlin**

9-2 So Sassy, 5-1 Espanita, Amelia's Joy, 6-1 Angels' Share, 13-2 Hamaleel, 8-1 Redredrobin, Celtic Arrow, 10-1 Dream Illusion.

5.40 Fillies' Stakes (2-Y-O: £5,400: 7f) (9)
1 (5) 0506 **CLEAR HORIZON** 20 J Portman 9-2 **O Tubb (5)**
2 (3) 0 **EAGLE STORM** 16 C Johnston 9-2 **D Muscutt**
3 (6) 02424 **FOREST BERRY** 16 Sir M Prescott 9-2 **L Morris**
4 (7) 3 **HALCON** 61 T Easterby 9-2 **S B Kirrane**
5 (9) **HEAVENLY PAROLE** M Bell 9-2 **S De Sousa**
6 (8) 5 **PON PON DALIA** 16 M Botti 9-2 **M Ghiani**
7 (2) 03 **STEAMY WONDER** 13 D Cunha 9-2 **S Donohoe**
8 (1) 0 **THEFT** 16 G Scott 9-2 **D Keenan**
9 (4) 00 **VELMA DINKLEY** 47 Faye Bramley 9-2 **C Lee**

100-30 Halcon, 7-2 Forest Berry, 9-2 Pon Pon Dalia, 6-1 Steamy Wonder, 8-1 Theft, Clear Horizon, 10-1 Eagle Storm, 12-1 others.

6.10 Nursery (Div I: 2-Y-O: £3,978: 6f) (10)
1 (10) 41054 **MARGARET'S PEARL** 44 (P,T) Lemos Souza 9-9 **C Lee**
2 (7) 054 **MENHAAL** 11 (P) Owen Burrows 9-7 **D Probert**
3 (6) 61 **SYDNEY GRACE** 69 C Fellowes 9-7 **P Bradley**
4 (2) 33 **WONDERVISION** 86 (BF) J Channon 9-3 **G Bass**
5 (1) 026 **GREEN TITAN** 53 (BF) G Boughey 9-3 **J Callan**
6 (5) 34 **HORNDEAN** 33 (T) Adam Kirby 9-2 **D Tudhope**
7 (4) 005 **ROYAL TITAN** 23 M Botti 9-1 **M Ghiani**
8 (3) 4402 **NASCENT STAR** 12 H Palmer 9-1 **R Havlin**
9 (9) 34 **LOLA** 42 T Ward 8-10 **P-L Jamin**
10 (8) 33065 **SABLE ISLAND** 26 C Dwyer 8-10 **S De Sousa**

9-2 Nascent Star, 5-1 Menhaal, Wondervision, 11-2 Sydney Grace, 6-1 Margaret's Pearl, 13-2 Green Titan, 10-1 Horndean, 16-1 Sable Island, Royal Titan, Lola.

6.40 Nursery (Div II: 2-Y-O: £3,978: 6f) (10)
1 (8) 104 **ANGEL ANG** 21 (CD) P Evans 9-9 **D Probert**
2 (7) 33 **SEA PALACE** 49 Ollie Sangster 9-9 **S Donohoe**
3 (1) 34414 **CAILIN AINE** 66 T Easterby 9-6 **S B Kirrane**
4 (5) 003 **REX REGUM** 21 Tom Clover 9-5 **C Lee**
5 (3) 526 **GREEK STREET** 86 Harry Eustace 9-4 **Kaiya Fraser**
6 (2) 40561 **INVINCIBLE ISAAC** 12 (V,D) Lemos Souza 9-3 **S De Sousa**
7 (6) 13603 **SEED YA LATER** 16 (H) J Channon 9-3 **G Bass**
8 (4) 063 **UNBEATABLE FAME** 9 R & P Fahey 9-1 **C Hardie**
9 (10) 006 **ZOHAR** 62 (P) C Fellowes 8-12 **P Bradley**
10 (9) 006 **TRUST YOURSELF** 51 (W) J Tate 8-11 **L Morris**

7-2 Cailin Aine, 5-1 Sea Palace, 6-1 Seed Ya Later, 7-1 Invincible Isaac, 8-1 Rex Regum, Greek Street, Angel Ang, 10-1 Unbeatable Fame.

7.10 Handicap (£3,978: 6f) (10)
1 (4) 44420 **KELDEO** 23 (BF,D) O Pears 5-9-9 **H Russell**
2 (2) 24500 **TRAVEL AGENT** 31 (CD) Adam Kirby 4-9-9 **R Havlin**
3 (6) 2-060 **TIGER TULIP** 73 (CD) H Main 5-9-9 **L Morris**
4 (8) 40061 **MAHARAJAS EXPRESS** 23 (C,D) I Williams 6-9-7 **D Probert**
5 (3) 3-606 **BILL PLUMB** 118 (P,T,CD) P McEntee 7-9-7 **D Muscutt**
6 (9) 40053 **HECTIC** 11 (P,D) L Bailey 6-9-7 **J Watson**
7 (10) 63456 **DICKO THE LEGEND** 24 (CD) L Bailey 6-9-7 **D Tudhope**
8 (5) 05312 **STYLE KING** 13 (P,BF,CD) C Dwyer 4-9-5 **S De Sousa**
9 (1) 3-450 **IN THE CITY** 21 (V) W Greatrex 4-9-3 **E Greatrex**
10 (7) 56360 **BLUE FORCE** 80 (H,C) A Brittain 5-9-1 **C Hardie**

5-2 Style King, 5-1 Hectic, Maharajas Express, 13-2 Keldeo, 7-1 Dicko The Legend, 8-1 Tiger Tulip, 10-1 Travel Agent, 20-1 Bill Plumb.

7.40 Classified Stakes (£3,245: 5f) (9)
1 (3) 00656 **ALAFDHAL** 12 (V,CD) P McEntee 8-9-9 **D Muscutt**
2 (8) 05005 **BATTLE POINT** 17 (D) M Attwater 7-9-9 **G Mangan**
3 (2) 500-0 **JUNGLE DANCE** 177 (CD) J R Jenkins 5-9-9 **C Lee**
4 (7) 00034 **LET'S GO HUGO** 9 (P,CD) O Pears 6-9-9 **T Kiely-Marshall (5)**
5 (9) 34005 **MEGAPHONE** 18 (CD) S Dixon 4-9-9 **K O'Neill**
6 (6) 02300 **MISTER MCGREGOR** 16 (B,E) M Mullineaux 4-9-9 **S De Sousa**
7 (5) 2-300 **RAJETERIAT** 10 C Gordon 4-9-9 **J Callan**
8 (1) 20006 **SHE WENT WHOOSH** 47 (P,T,D) S Dixon 4-9-9 **C Howarth (3)**
9 (4) 00356 **OUR HERO MATTY** 13 (B) T Culhane & S Barclay 3-9-7 **S Donohoe**

5-2 Let's Go Hugo, 5-1 Alafdhal, Megaphone, 13-2 Battle Point, 8-1 Mister Mcgregor, 10-1 Jungle Dance, Our Hero Matty, 12-1 others.

8.10 Handicap (£3,978: 1m 4f) (11)
1 (1) 40152 **OPTICIAN** 19 (BF,CD) M Herrington 6-10-2 **D Probert**
2 (10) 5353- **SIGLIOSA** 315 Dan Horsford 4-10-1 **J Watson**
3 (6) /01-0 **VAGUER** 43 J Fanshawe 6-10-1 **D Muscutt**
4 (5) 13310 **CLANSMAN** 51 (D) L Bailey 8-9-12 **T Moore (7)**
5 (11) 2-155 **SERIOUS LOOK** 42 (C) T Faulkner 6-9-12 **R Havlin**
6 (9) 01044 **JOSEPH** 17 (P) J Butler 4-9-9 **J Callan**
7 (3) 2-20 **PURE MOON** 109 (BF) Tom Clover 3-9-7 **C Lee**
8 (4) 3-303 **PRINCE OF CALYPSO** 21 (P) E Bethell 3-9-4 **D Tudhope**
9 (2) 43-62 **JAMES CHOICE** 21 W Greatrex 3-9-4 **E Greatrex**
10 (8) 060 **PACE ATTACK** 111 Sir M Prescott 3-8-13 **L Morris**
11 (7) 55-4 **CHOIR BOY** 220 (V) A Brittain 3-8-11 **C Hardie**

9-2 Pure Moon, 5-1 Optician, James Choice, 11-2 Prince Of Calypso, 13-2 Pace Attack, 8-1 Clansman, 10-1 Sigliosa, 12-1 Serious Look.

Results

Football

Community Shield
Arsenal (2) **3** — **Man City** (0) **0**
Calafiori 1, Havertz 28, Odegaard 48 — 58,056
(Principality Stadium, Cardiff)

Sky Bet Championship
Burnley (0) **2** — **West Ham** (1) **2**
Flemming 83 (pen), 90+2 — Kilman 10, Solomon 72

Watford (2) **2** — **Southampton** (0) **1**
Bravo 12, Nabizada 29 — Larin 56, 19,542

Today Cardiff v Wrexham (8.0).
● table on page 55

Scottish Premier Sports Cup Second round
Hearts (1) **6** — **Inverness CT** (0) **2**
Borchgrevink 16, Mato 59, Miller 82 (pen), 90+4, Wilson 84, Braga 90'+1 — Duncan 54, Bavidge 56, 15,327

Hibernian (1) **1** — **Partick** (0) **0**
Elding 12 — 10,608

Rangers (2) **5** — **St Mirren** (1) **1**
Naderi 9, Dragojević 18, Gassama 52, Penrice 54, McCausland 74 — Mochrie 30, 34,387

Stenhousemr (0) **1** — **Motherwell** (0) **0**
O'Reilly 114 (aet) — 1,943

Athletics

European Championships
Alexander Stadium, Birmingham: Finals: Leading positions: Men: 3,000m steeplechase 1, F Ruppert (Ger) 8min 25.33sec; 2, R Querinjean (Lux) 8:25.61; 3, K Bebendorf (Ger) 8:26.65. **Pole vault** 1, A Duplantis (Swe) 6.20m (Championship record); 2, E Karalis (Gr) 6.00; 3, B Thiery (Fr) 5.85. **4x400m relay** 1, Italy 2:59.16; 2, Great Britain (M Hudson-Smith, T Harries, B Jeffries, C Dobson) 2:59.19; 3, Netherlands 2:59.49. **Marathon** 1, A Petros (Ger) 2hr 9min 11sec (Championship record); 2, P Riva (It) 2:09:18; 3, G Ayale (Isr) 2:09:21. **Women: 1,500m** 1, G Hunter Bell (GB) 4:07.78; 2, K Kazimierska (Pol) 4:08.80; 3, P Silva (Por) 4:09.22. **Long jump** 1, L Iapichino (It) 7.00m; 2, J Sawyers (GB) 6.99; 3, H Kpatcha Fr) 6.98. **Javelin** 1, S Kolak (Cro) 62.43m; 2, J Ulbricht (Ger) 61.53; 3, A Vilagos (Ser) 60.93. **4x400m relay** 1, Netherlands 3:21.10; 2, Great Britain (Y John, L Nielsen, N Yeargin, E Newnham) 3:21.68; 3, Italy 3:23.57. **Marathon** 1, A Vainio (Fin) 2:22:26 (Championship record); 2 L Toth (Hun) 2:27:21; 3, A Donnelly (GB) 2:27:33. **Mixed: 4x100m relay** 1, x Great Britain (J Azuh, D Asher-Smith, Z Hughes, A Hunt) 39.97 (European record); 2, Germany 40.11; 3, Spain 40.42.

● Final medals table on page 52

Cricket

The Hundred finals: Men Trent Rockets v Manchester Super Giants
Lord's (Manchester Super Giants won toss): Manchester Super Giants beat Trent Rockets by five wickets

Trent Rockets		(balls)
B M Duckett c Buttler b Lakanwal	31	(24)
F H Allen c du Plooy b Lakanwal	15	(13)
A H T Donald b Dawson	38	(19)
*†S W Billings run out	4	(5)
T H David c Buttler b Lakanwal	0	(1)
M J Santner not out	20	(16)
L Gregory c Klaasen b Tongue	33	(16)
C Overton c Klaasen b Baker	11	(5)
C G Harrison b Baker	0	(1)
Extras (lb 2, w 4)	6	
Total (8 wkts, 100 balls)	**158**	

M Amir and B W Sanderson did not bat.
Fall of wickets 1-48, 2-53, 3-86, 4-91, 5-95, 6-139, 7-158, 8-158.
Bowling Atkinson 20-6-36-0; Tongue 20-9-27-1; Dawson 20-7-25-1; Baker 20-5-34-2; Ahmad 20-9-33-3.

Manchester Super Giants		(balls)
T L Seifert c Billings b Aamer	72	(38)
P I Walter c Duckett b Harrison	22	(14)
*†J C Buttler c David b Harrison	23	(14)
J L du Plooy not out	27	(18)
H Klaasen c Donald b Aamer	11	(9)
M G Bracewell lbw b Aamer	0	(2)
L A Dawson not out	6	(3)
Extras (w 1)	1	
Total (5 wkts, 98 balls)	**162**	

A A P Atkinson, N A Lakanwal, S Baker and J C Tongue did not bat.
Fall of wickets 1-66, 2-100, 3-136, 4-156, 5-156.
Bowling Amir 20-8-29-3; Overton 20-7-44-0; Sanderson 18-6-30-0; Harrison 15-6-30-2; Santner 15-8-8-0; Gregory 10-0-21-0.

Women: Trent Rockets v Sunrisers Leeds
Lord's (Trent Rockets won toss): Trent Rockets beat Sunrisers Leeds by eight wickets

Sunrisers Leeds		(balls)
B F Smith c Sciver-Brunt b Garth	7	(7)
P E S Litchfield c Adams b Phillips	10	(5)
†L Winfield-Hill c Dunkley b Garth	0	(1)
A J Sutherland st Mooney b Adams	25	(23)
D B Sharma b Phillips	12	(16)
*D R Gibson c Garth b Gardner	22	(16)
J L Jonassen run out	0	(3)
D E M Carter b Bates	0	(1)
K L Cross b Adams	7	(10)
H L Baker not out	3	(6)
C M McCarthy lbw b Bates	2	(3)
Extras (w 3)	3	
Total (91 balls)	**91**	

Fall of wickets 1-17, 2-18, 3-24, 4-56, 5-58, 6-58, 7-62, 8-82, 9-88.
Bowling Garth 15-9-18-2; Bates 16-9-17-2; Phillips 15-8-12-2; Gardner 15-4-23-1; Elwiss 15-8-12-0; Adams 15-7-9-2.

Trent Rockets		(balls)
S I R Dunkley c Jonassen b Gibson	41	(23)
†B L Mooney not out	31	(21)
N R Sciver-Brunt lbw b Sutherland	4	(2)
*A K Gardner not out	9	(8)
Extras (b 2, lb 1, w 4)	7	
Total (2 wkts, 54 balls)	**92**	

S N Luff, B A M Heath, G L Adams, G A Elwiss, K J Garth, C N Phillips and S L Bates did not bat.
Fall of wickets 1-69, 2-74.
Bowling McCarthy 10-2-18-0; Cross 10-3-18-0; Jonassen 9-4-16-0; Baker 5-0-12-0; Sutherland 15-7-16-1; Gibson 5-1-9-1.

Metro Bank Cup
Semi-finals: Leicester Leicestershire 303-7 (H Shaikh 104); Nottinghamshire 280. *Leicestershire won by 23 runs*. **Radlett** Durham 254-7 (W Rhodes 80); Middlesex 255-8 (L Hollman 83 not out). *Middlesex won by two wickets.*

Golf

DP World Tour Danish Championship
Kerteminde, Funen: Leading final scores (Great Britain and Ireland unless stated): **273** J Winther (Den) 71, 67, 68, 67. **276** R Hoejgaard (Den) 70, 67, 70, 69; O Lindell (Fin) 67, 71, 70, 68; M Jordan 68, 67, 70, 71; F Celli (It) 67, 70, 73, 66; Zhou Yanhan (China) 69, 67, 67, 73. **277** R Langasque (Fr) 69, 66, 67, 75; M Helligkilde (Den) 70, 68, 71, 68.

US PGA Tour FedEx St Jude Championship
Memphis, Tennessee: Leaders after three rounds (United States unless stated): **197** S Scheffler 68, 61, 68. **199** S Burns 67, 70, 62; Sung-Jae Im (S Kor) 66, 66, 67. **202** T Fleetwood (Eng) 66, 68, 68; J Knapp 65, 70, 67. **203** B Harman 70, 64, 69; Kim Si-woo (S Kor) 70, 68, 65; H Matsuyama (Japan) 66, 70, 67; A Noren (Swe) 71, 66, 66.

VP Bank Swiss Women's Open
Rotkreuz: Leading final scores (Great Britain and Ireland unless stated): **200** E Givens 68, 66, 66. **201** A Foster 67, 66, 68; A Försterling (Ger) 66, 68, 67; W Hillier (Aus) 66, 67, 68. **202** K Arwefjaell (Swe) 64, 66, 72. **203** A Latorre (Sp) 65 71 67. **204** L Hall 70, 68, 66; H Lee (Sp) 68, 70, 66.

LPGA Tour Standard Portland Classic
Portland, Oregon: Leaders after three rounds (United States unless stated): **200** A Yubol (Thai) 66, 66, 68; S Schubert 67, 66, 67. **202** A Thitikul (Thai) 68, 67, 67. **203** An Na-rin (S Kor) 69, 68, 66. **204** M Katsu (Japan) 70, 67, 67; Chella Choi (Kor) 70, 67, 67; C Wannasaen (Thai) 69, 68, 67; M de Roey (Bel) 67, 69, 68; E Hara (Japan) 69, 66, 69; Jeon Ji-won (S Kor) 67, 71, 66.

Rugby league
Betfred Championship Batley 22 Keighley 18; Doncaster 44 Midlands Hurricanes 16; Halifax 10 Widnes 11; Oldham 34 London Broncos 24; Sheffield 28 Hunslet 26; Swinton 58 North Wales 6; Whitehaven 60 Dewsbury 10; Workington 20 Rochdale 22.

Snooker

China Open
Taiyuan City: Final (best-of-19 frames): **M Selby (Eng) bt N Saengkham (Thai) 10-6** (frame scores; Selby first): 8-67, 89-38, 138-0 (138 break), 0-73, 0-80 (80), 5-75 (51), 70-68 (MS 53, NS 57), 73-32, 74-0 (58), 91-37 (90), 103-27 (69), 62-29 (52), 25-82 (71), 77-68 (68 NS), 1-61 (61), 74-27 (52).

Tennis

Cincinnati Open
Second round: Men J Fonseca (Br) bt B van de Zandschulp (Neth) 6-4, 7-6 (7-2); C O'Connell (Aus) bt C Ruud (Nor) 7-5, 1-2 ret; D Medvedev (Russ) bt M Trungelliti (Arg) 6-4, 7-5; M Zheng (US) bt U Humbert (Fr) 6-4, 6-3; F Auger-Aliassime (Can) bt S Tsitsipas (Gr) 6-3, 7-5; L Musetti (It) bt D Altmaier (Ger) 6-4, 6-2; T Fritz (US) bt A Michelsen (US) 6-3, 6-4; B Nakashima (US) bt A Kovacevic (US) 6-2, 7-5; J M Cerúndolo (Arg) bt A Rinderknech (Fr) 4-6, 7-6 (7-3), 7-6 (7-5). **Women** Wang Xinyu (China) bt D Vekic (Cro) 3-6, 6-1, 6-4; S Bejlek (Cz) bt B Krejcikov (Cz) 7-6 (7-5), 6-4; M Keys (US) bt D Snigur (Ukr) 4-6, 6-3, 6-3; M Bouzkov (Cz) bt L Stefanini (It) 6-2, 6-4; J Tjen (Indo) bt V Golubic (Switz) 7-6 (10-8), 5-7, 7-5; M Andreeva (Russ) bt O Oliynykova (Ukr) 6-1, 6-0; I Swiatek (Pol) bt E Arango (Col) 6-3, 6-0; E Rybakina (Kaz) bt T Townsend (US) 6-3, 6-4; A Li (US) bt S Zhang (China) 7-5, 6-3.

Yesterday's racing results

Pontefract
Going: Good to Firm (good in places)

3.45 (6f) 1, **Varzi** (S H James, 4-5 fav); 2, Diamondsforyou (12-1); 3, Magic Harry (3-1). 5 ran. 3¼l, nk. K R Burke.

4.15 (1m 6yd) 1, **Luna Celeste** (D Tudhope, 15-8 fav); 2, Darzah (5-2); 3, Quisana (11-2). 5 ran. 27½l, 2l. Tom Clover.

4.45 (6f) 1, **America Queen** (D Tudhope, 11-10); 2, Ruby's Angel (25-1); 3, Arabian Dusk (13-2). 10 ran. NR: Magic Basma. 4l, 1¼l. R Hughes.

5.15 (1m 2f 5yd) 1, **High Degree** (Cieren Fallon, 6-4 fav); 2, Financer (14-1); 3, Shoof Baeed (15-2). 8 ran. 17½l, ¾l. W J Haggas.

5.45 (5f 3yd) 1, **Fluorescence** (O J Orr, 2-1 fav; **Thunderer's nap**); 2, Badri (5-2); 3, Baker Blue (6-1). 8 ran. 1¼l, ½l. E Bethell.

6.15 (2m 1f 27yd) 1, **Letsbefrank** (Lauren Young, 9-2); 2, Campeona (6-4); 3, Pole Star (3-1). 5 ran. NR: Laafy. 2½l, 1½l. J S Goldie.

6.45 (6f) 1, **The Good Biscuit** (Joanna Mason, 10-1); 2, Havana Rum (11-2); 3, Fiscal Policy (28-1). 9 ran. 1¼l, ½l. Mrs R Carr.

Placepot: £7.50
Quadpot: £3.40
Jackpot: £250.30

Southwell
Going: Standard

1.30 (1m 4f 14yd) 1, **Cliff Danger** (K T O'Neill, 6-1); 2, Astrological (11-8 fav); 3, Domination (13-2). 12 ran. ¾l, 1l. Mrs P Sly.

2.00 (1m 13yd) 1, **Heretic** (David Probert, 6-1); 2, Have You A Minute (11-1); 3, Splinterwood (20-1). 13 ran. NR: Mercurius Power. 2l, 1l. M Herrington.

2.35 (1m 13yd) 1, **Palladas** (Billy Loughnane, 2-11); 2, Mercantile (22-1); 3, Star Of The Desert (10-1). 10 ran. 2½l, 3½l. C Appleby.

3.10 (1m 13yd) 1, **Prosperity** (Pierre-Louis Jamin, 4-6); 2, Al Jolson (6-4); 3, Savile Row (17-2). 9 ran. NR: Sotto Il Sasso. nk, 6½l. K R Burke.

3.40 (7f 14yd) 1, **Valvano** (H Crouch, 5-1); 2, Sovereign Ocean (100-30); 3, Aurora Majesty (18-1). 13 ran. NR: Willem Twee. 17½l, ½l. R M Beckett.

4.10 (6f 16yd) 1, **Storm Force** (James Doyle, 2-1 fav); 2, Poison Arrow (2-1 fav); 3, Space Party (3-1). 10 ran. 3l, 1½l. R A Fahey.

4.40 (6f 16yd) 1, **Yordan** (Jack Callan, 6-5 fav); 2, Black Orchid (9-2); 3, Project Wallace (20-1). 9 ran. 27½l, hd. K A Ryan.

5.10 (6f 16yd) 1, **Massimo Blue** (K S McHugh, 5-1); 2, Toptime (12-1); 3, On Key (10-1). 14 ran. 2¼l, ½l. Dylan Cunha.

5.40 (1m 3f 23yd) 1, **Mdawi** (Ray Dawson, 100-30); 2, Jeewan (5-1); 3, Ashj'Aa (4-6 fav). 4 ran. 5l, 5l. P Collington.

Placepot: £14.40
Quadpot: £2.00

The 77mph seamer who has better Test average than Wasim

Mohammad Abbas, a former welder with 897 first-class wickets, is key for Pakistan, writes **Mike Atherton**

The problem with being a pundit-turned-gamekeeper is that everything said in a past life gets scrutinised and held against you in the next. So it is for Rob Key, whose insistence, early in his time in charge, that 75mph bowlers with the wicketkeeper up to the stumps are not a strategy to pursue in Tests has been gleefully repeated given the recent success of the tactic against his England team.

Never mind that the likes of Michael Neser, in the Ashes, and Matt Henry, in the recent New Zealand series, were above 80mph rather than 75mph; never mind that they required some outstanding keeping from Alex Carey and Tom Blundell to realise their gains, or that Key was actually making some broader and lucid observations about how he wanted to incentivise better bowlers in county cricket. It's perceived as fair game.

And now comes Mohammad Abbas, perhaps the most fascinating figure in the Pakistan touring party. He is a Test specialist, who has never played a T20 international and who has played three ODIs only; a 36-year-old seamer, still going strong at a time when many are thinking of their superannuation, and someone who *does* bowl at about the 125kph mark (around 77mph), prioritising skill and accuracy over pace. He has an outstanding record doing so.

England v Pakistan
First Test, Headingley
Starts Wednesday, 11am
TV: Sky Sports Main Event/Cricket

Like the present England management, Pakistan have a wary relationship with this kind of bowler, as indicated by Abbas's total of only 30 Tests since his debut in 2017. Pakistan don't play as much Test cricket as England — just six Tests in the past 18 months — but the glorious and colourful history of bowling in the country rests largely on their quickest bowlers, luminaries such as Imran Khan, Wasim Akram, Waqar Younis and Shoaib Akhtar, all capable of devastating bursts.

Yet there is another thread to their story as well, of slightly slower, accurate and skilful bowlers. Less eye-catching and less devastating, perhaps, but worthy of respect nonetheless. There was the wily Mohammad Asif, for example; ask Kevin Pietersen which bowlers he would not like to face again and Asif would be high on his list.

Abbas has a bowling average of 21.40 in five Tests in England

Abbas fits squarely into this tradition. Remarkably, his average in Test cricket — he has taken 118 wickets at 22.38 — trumps that of Imran, Wasim and Waqar, and he owns the lowest bowling average of any Pakistan bowler who has sent down more than 2,000 balls in Test cricket. Yet after he took eight wickets in the opening Test of the recent tour of the Caribbean, he was omitted for the second match (fairly as it turned out, given they won and squared the series with the extra spinner).

He came to international recognition quite late, having worked in various trades, as a welder, initially, and in a leather factory. Tape-ball cricket was an important part of the equation, as it has been with lots of Pakistan players. The journey to the top was not straightforward and one imagines that Abbas does not take his responsibility playing for Pakistan lightly as a result.

The roadmap to the top in Pakistan can be an arbitrary affair, and in an interview with the journalist Osman Samiuddin last year, Abbas said that he found the structure and regularity of county cricket to his liking: his tools are perfectly suited to the rhythms of summer-long championship cricket. He is another example of a system, often criticised at home, that has nurtured and benefited a player from abroad immensely.

Since 2018 he has played for Leicestershire, Hampshire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire and his numbers have been outstanding. For Hampshire he took 180 wickets at an average of 19, for Leicestershire 79 wickets at 20 and for Nottinghamshire 32 wickets at 21, although this year he has struggled at Derbyshire, taking 11 wickets at over 40 in five matches. All told in first-class cricket, he has 897 wickets at 20.39. Will he pass the thousand mark — there won't be many more to do so — or do a Glen Chapple and fall just short?

He has a nondescript run-up and no great gather at the crease; his long fingers allow him to manipulate the ball this way and that, off the seam mainly rather than in the air. He has learnt to use the crease to create angles when not much is happening off the pitch. He is accurate and skilful and the Dukes ball is to his liking: the last time Pakistan won a Test in England, at Lord's in 2018, he took eight wickets.

How this hottest, driest summer in living memory will play out for him remains to be seen. In Pakistan's warm-up match at Beckenham the parched outfield was a reminder of the summer we have been experiencing, but Abbas still found enough movement to pocket three wickets in the first innings against a Lions team that included Emilio Gay, who bagged a pair in preparation for this week's Test.

Will England's batsmen be crease-bound or look to use their feet to negate his movement? On the back of that question is the delicious context of England's recent struggles against medium-pacers with the keeper up to the stumps. That chink in the armour of the Bazballers was initially exposed in New Zealand, then by Carey in the Ashes and again earlier this summer when Blundell's outstanding work to Henry caused England's batsmen, and especially Harry Brook, no end of trouble.

In the same interview with Samiuddin, Abbas acknowledged the way batsmen try to use their feet to him to negate his accuracy and skill, and attempt to take advantage of his lack of pace. "I have a good record against batters who stay in their crease, so they come out to combat that often," he said. So Mohammad Rizwan, the chatty, jack-in-a-box wicketkeeper, looms as an important ally for Abbas, if England's batsmen try the same again.

The traditional narrative when Pakistan toured in, say, the 1990s was of a team who would have all the ammunition, but this time it is England who have high pace. Key is right, of course, that the history of winning Test cricket, especially since the advent of covered pitches, belongs largely to quick bowlers, and Jofra Archer, Josh Tongue and Gus Atkinson will be quicker than their counterparts.

It takes an outstandingly skilful bowler to succeed at Abbas's pace and he is just that. Abbas will be among the slowest of the seamers on show, though the fable of the tortoise and the hare should keep England's batsmen on their toes.

Impressive Abbas

The 36-year-old has only recently broken in to Pakistan's top 20 wicket-takers but has best average of them all

	Mat	Wkts	Ave
Wasim Akram	104	414	23.62
Waqar Younis	87	373	23.56
Imran Khan	88	362	22.81
Danish Kaneria	61	261	34.79
Yasir Shah	48	244	31.38
Abdul Qadir	67	236	32.8
Saqlain Mushtaq	49	208	29.83
Mushtaq Ahmed	52	185	32.97
Shoaib Akhtar	46	178	25.69
Saeed Ajmal	35	178	28.1
Sarfraz Nawaz	55	177	32.75
Iqbal Qasim	50	171	28.11
Umar Gul	47	163	34.06
Fazal Mahmood	34	139	24.7
Shaheen Shah Afridi	34	126	28.13
Intikhab Alam	47	125	35.95
Mohammad Amir	36	119	30.47
Mohammad Abbas	30	118	22.38
Mohammad Asif	23	106	24.36
Noman Ali	22	101	25.08

Source: ESPNcricinfo

Jos's Giants deny

Trent Rockets v Manchester Super Giants

Lord's (Manchester Super Giants won the toss and decided to field): Manchester won by five wickets

Trent Rockets Women v SunRisers Leeds Women

Lord's (Trent Rockets won the toss and decided to field): Trent Rockets won by eight wickets

Elizabeth Ammon

Trent Rockets missed out on a double trophy-winning day after their men's team lost to Manchester Super Giants by five wickets in a thrillingly tense final after their women had secured a dominant win over Leeds Sunrisers.

A batting masterclass from Tim Seifert, who blasted 72 from 38 balls, led the Old Trafford based franchise led by Jos Buttler to a comfortable win after the Afghanistan left-arm spinner Noor Ahmad had helped to restrict Rockets to nothing more than a par score of 158 batting first.

It was a stop-start innings by the Rockets. Ben Duckett made 31 from 24 opening while Glamorgan's Aneurin Donald made 38 from 19, before Ahmad removed both openers and the big-hitting Tim David for a duck to finished with three for 33 from his 20 balls. Sonny Baker also played a vital role in restricting Rockets with two for 34 while Josh Tongue, who will be playing for England in the first Test against Pakistan, was responsible for ending the destructive cameo of 32 from 16 by Lewis Gregory.

STEVEN PASTON/PA

Fireworks explode in front of the Lord's pavilion last night as the Super Giants' men's team and the Rockets' women celebrate on the outfield. Seifert, left, was the mainstay of the Manchester innings before a tense finish, while Dunkley, right, helped to ease the Rockets home in a more one-sided game

Rockets Hundred double

Super Giants got off to a flying start with Seifert and Paul Walter sharing a half-century partnership off the first 18 balls. Rockets were convinced they had finally got Seifert with a relay catch at deep mid-wicket off Overton. The ball was dragged back from over the rope by Allen to Calvin Harrison, but extensive replays showed that Allen's standing toe had just flicked the boundary rope before he released it back into the field of play, and a six was given.

When Seifert finally departed with 23 balls left he had blasted 72 from just 38 balls and Super Giants needed only a run a ball to win. Despite late drama with the dismissals of Heinrich Klaason and Michael Bracewell in consecutive balls, Super Giants — who are coached by Justin Langer — got over the line thanks to a six over mid-wicket with two balls to spare.

Earlier Sophia Dunkley and Beth Mooney starred with the bat and Georgia Adams with the ball to lead Rockets to a dominant win over Leeds Sunrisers to lift the Women's Hundred trophy.

Dunkley and Mooney secured a very comfortable run-chase after a superb all-round performance with the ball by the Rockets and a particularly poor batting display by the Sunrisers, who did not even bat out their 100 balls, being dismissed for 91 from 91 balls.

The Australia spinner Kim Garth did the early damage, striking twice in three balls to dismiss the opener Bryony Smith and claim the crucial wicket of the Sunrisers' captain Lauren Winfield-Hill.

Charley Phillips took the big wickets of Australia's Phoebe Litchfield and Deepti Sharma, to finish with two for 12 from 15 balls.

Only Australia's Annabel Sutherland found any fluency before she was stumped by her former Australia teammate Mooney off player of the match Adams who took two for nine.

The England all-rounder and Sunrisers' captain Dani Gibson tried her best to salvage the innings with 22 from 16 but when she was caught at backward point on the 77th ball, Rockets were able to wrap things up quickly.

With such a low total to chase, Rockets were under no pressure. Dunkley and Mooney struck 69 from 40 balls before the partnership was broken by Gibson and although Sutherland got the big wicket of the England captain, Nat Sciver-Brunt, Mooney was still there as Rockets calmly knocked off the remaining runs to win with eight wickets and 46 balls to spare.

Scoreboards, page 49

Bangladesh stun Australia with nine-wicket win

Australia v Bangladesh

Darwin (fourth day of five): Bangladesh beat Australia by nine wickets

Elizabeth Ammon

Bangladesh completed a stunning nine-wicket victory over Australia in the first Test in Darwin yesterday, securing their first win on Australian soil and only their second triumph against the top-ranked red-ball side.

After making a vital 65 with the bat in Bangladesh's first innings, Mehidy Hasan Miraz took five wickets in Australia's second to restrict the hosts to a lead of 56 runs. Australia were bowled out for 284 midway through the afternoon session at the Marrara Oval.

It was a significant victory given the wider context surrounding Bangladeshi cricket. The team had withdrawn from the T20 World Cup in India earlier this year for political reasons and in the warm-up fixture before this Test they were bowled out for 54 by a Cricket Australia XI.

For Australia it is a hugely bruising defeat, which signifies the need for some changes, especially in the batting line-up. The opener Jake Weatherald and No 3 Marnus Labuschagne are under pressure for their places.

Pat Cummins, the Australia captain, said there were "no excuses" and hinted that changes would be considered before the second Test in Mackay next weekend. Josh Inglis, who played in the Brisbane and Adelaide Tests during the most recent Ashes series, is the reserve batsman in the squad.

"They outplayed us in all facets," Cummins said. "I thought they were really patient and disciplined. Once we were behind, it was really hard to get back."

Weatherald, the Darwin-born left-hander, has played only six Tests, but is averaging 20.36 and will probably be given the second Test to try to prove himself before Australia look elsewhere. Matthew Renshaw and Sam Konstas are two options who could join Travis Head at the top of the order.

Labuschagne is of more concern. He has not made a Test century for three years and scored only 259 runs at 28.77 during Australia's previous home Test summer.

"We'll sit down and have a think — the selectors will have a think about: is there something that is going to take us forward, or is it something that is starting to become a trend that we think needs to be changed?" Cummins said.

Bangladesh suffered some early nerves in their chase when Josh Hazlewood dismissed the first-innings centurion Tanzid Hasan for a five-ball duck, but Shadman Islam and Mominul Haque held their composure to reach the target in 14.2 overs, sparking wild celebrations from the Bangladesh fans behind the team dugout.

This is the biggest win so far for Bangladesh in any format, their captain, Najmul Hossain Shanto, said. "We will do something special in the future," he added.

It was a thoroughly deserved result for Bangladesh, who outplayed Australia for much of the Test after Cummins won the toss and elected to bat.

Australia managed just 198 in their first innings, with the man of the match Hasan Mahmud taking six for 55, before Bangladesh capitalised on a flattening pitch to post 426 all out and take a commanding 228-run lead.

That advantage ultimately proved too much for Australia to overcome despite Cameron Green's hundred, as Bangladesh secured a historic victory, which was only their second against Australia after their maiden win in Dhaka in 2017.

For Australia, this defeat will rank as one of their most humiliating home reverses in their 149-year Test history.

"I think every time there's a game like this, you always look at your match-ups and your make-up with the team for the next one," Cummins said. "We're pretty good at bouncing back, so no doubt the batters and every group will get together and have a good think about this one and where we can improve."

The door was ajar for Australia at 161 for four at the start of the day, with Green and Alex Carey at the crease, but Mehidy claimed four more wickets with a superb spell either side of lunch.

The two-Test series starts a heavy 12-month schedule for Australia that will feature 20 more Test matches, including tours to South Africa, India and England.

Scoreboard

Australia First Innings

T Head b Mahmud	22
J Weatherald c Das b Mahmud	23
M Labuschagne c Shanto b Hossain	1
S Smith c Das b Mahmud	71
C Green c Rahim b Ahmed	13
†A Carey b Hossain	19
B Webster b Ahmed	12
*P Cummins c Das b Mahmud	9
M Starc c Das b Mahmud	1
N Lyon c Hasan b Mahmud	7
J Hazlewood not out	4
Extras (b 5, lb 8, nb 3)	16
Total (53 overs)	**198**

Fall of wickets 1-45, 2-52, 3-61, 4-74, 5-129, 6-152, 7-172, 8-176, 9-189.
Bowling Ahmed 16-2-55-2; Mahmud 17-3-55-6; Hossain 11-2-39-2; Miraz 4-0-12-0; T Islam 5-0-24-0.

Bangladesh First Innings

Shadman Islam c Lyon b Starc	20
Tanzid Hasan c Starc b Lyon	101
†Mominul Haque c Carey b Hazlewood	49
*Najmul Shanto c Smith b Hazlewood	84
Mushfiqur Rahim c Smith b Cummins	36
Litton Das † c Smith b Starc	0
Mehidy Miraz c Carey b Hazlewood	65
Hasan Mahmud lbw b Hazlewood	14
Taijul Islam c Green b Hazlewood	17
Taskin Ahmed not out	14
Ebadot Hossain c Carey b Hazlewood	7
Extras (b 6, lb 6, nb 6, w 1)	19
Total (138 overs)	**426**

Fall of wickets 1-36, 2-138, 3-231, 4-297, 5-306, 6-308, 7-354, 8-372, 9-418.
Bowling Starc 26-3-79-2; Hazlewood 28-3-89-6; Green 10-2-34-0; Cummins 27-4-75-1; Lyon 31-4-102-1; Webster 10-1-28-0; Head 2-0-3-0; Labuschagne 4-1-4-0.

Australia Second Innings

T Head b Mahmud	17
J Weatherald b Mahmud	0
M Labuschagne b T Islam	31
S Smith c and b Miraz	44
C Green b Mahmud	104
†A Carey c Das b Miraz	30
B Webster b Miraz	5
*P Cummins c S Islam b Miraz	8
M Starc c Das b Ahmed	18
N Lyon lbw b Miraz	15
J Hazlewood not out	0
Extras (b 1, lb 6, nb 5)	12
Total (95.1 overs)	**284**

Fall of wickets 1-4, 2-37, 3-73, 4-122, 5-178, 6-193, 7-207, 8-250, 9-278.
Bowling Ahmed 18-3-66-1; Mahmud 19-3-56-3; Hossain 8-0-38-0; T Islam 17-1-51-1; Miraz 33.1-6-66-5.

Bangladesh Second Innings

Shadman Islam not out	25
Tanzid Hasan b Hazlewood	0
Mominul Haque not out	30
Extras (lb 2)	2
Total (1 wkt, 14.2 overs)	**57**

Fall of wicket 1-4.
Bowling Starc 4-0-15-0; Hazlewood 3-1-5-1; Lyon 5-0-23-0; Webster 2.2-0-12-0.

Man of the match H Mahmud (Bangladesh).
● *Bangladesh lead the two-match series 1-0*
Second Test Saturday-Aug 26 (Mackay).

Sport European Championships

Hunt leads way in glorious

Matt Lawton

Chief Sports Correspondent

For the finest generation of British track and field athletes in decades, a week of intense competition here in Birmingham was as glorious in its conclusion as it pretty much had been from the start.

There was a fourth gold medal for the amazing Amy Hunt. Arms wide and tongue cheekily poking out, the 24-year-old flashed a beaming smile and then four fingers at the television cameras after carrying home the baton for the mixed relay quartet. "That was incredible," she said. "The first time we did that changeover was about an hour ago, in warm-up."

Such a hastily prepared victory also meant a record 11th appearance on a European podium for Dina Asher-Smith, and was then followed by yet another classy performance from a middle-distance runner who is so much more than merely Keely Hodgkinson's very talented friend and training partner.

Georgia Hunter Bell might have marked her remarkable transition from amateur park runner to professional medal winner by following Olympic bronze in Paris with a world silver in Tokyo last year, but now she is very much among the golden girls.

After winning a first world indoor title in March over 1,500m, the 32-year-old has followed that with a win in the 800m at last month's Commonwealth Games and this, a third major championship crown this year.

How relieved Hunter Bell must be that she decided to give the sport a second go after abandoning her dreams because of a miserable, injury-ravaged couple of years at a US university. Back then, it was only her father Andy, a TV political correspondent, who made the news. Now she does, with yet another headline-grabbing display.

Hunter Bell faced a decent 1,500m field. Seven of the 12 starters boasted a best time inside four minutes, with Agathe Guillemot of France a serious threat. She beat Hunter Bell in the European indoors last year and produced a stunning last lap to claim the French national title this season.

Tactically, Hunter Bell is so intelligent. In a slow race, she stayed out of trouble by sitting on the shoulder of the leader. And when the pace did finally pick up, some 450m from the finish, it was Hunter Bell dictating. She controlled things much like Sir Mo Farah once did, holding off Guillemot initially before kicking hard going into the final bend and pulling clear. The winning time was a modest 4min 7.78sec but Hunter Bell ran a rapid closing lap of 58.44. "I have to defend the house, because this is my home," she said.

Some 40 minutes earlier, Hunt completed her historic quadruple. It might be a stretch to compare Hunt's personal haul to the Olympic dominance of Jesse Owens and Carl Lewis but it remained a stunning achievement all the same.

In the women's sprint relay, Hunt had run the second leg, along the back straight. On this occasion, however, she was handed the honour of the anchor leg, seeing off the challenge of a slick German team to cross in a new European record of 39.97.

It is a curious, technically challenging event given the superior speed of the men coming in to hand the baton to a female team-mate. Asher-Smith said as much afterwards, reflecting on her own role in collecting from a fast-advancing Jeremiah Azu and then passing to the quickest British sprinter in history, Zharnel Hughes. "I was absolutely terrified," the 30-year-old former world champion said. "I just had to run as fast as humanly possible, but I was so happy when I got the baton out of my hand, to Zharnel."

Hunt also spoke of the pre-race nerves; the unique dangers of this particular event. "It was a bit like queuing for a rollercoaster; you're a little bit nervous and you're seeing the drops and stuff, and then when you get off you want to do it again.

"But, oh my gosh, I'm over the moon. It's just a dream come true — I'll remember this week for the rest of my life. And to finish it off with some of my best friends in the sport; me and Jeremiah actually have the same birthday so we're kind of twins. But look how smooth it was. Such professionals."

Like every championship, it closed with the one-lap relays. Britain's men's and women's teams both had to settle for silver. Charlie Dobson came agonisingly close to delivering the team's tenth gold medal in the men's race, but he finished 0.03sec behind Lorenzo Benati of Italy.

Away from the track, there were more British medals on this super Sunday. Jazmin Sawyers won Commonwealth gold last month and took a silver here in a fiercely competitive women's long jump competition, leaping to a personal best of 6.99m.

Earlier Abbie Donnelly claimed bronze in the women's marathon after clocking 2:27.33, and team gold thanks to Natasha Wilson finishing fifth and Rose Harvey 14th. But only after the sheer horror of discovering she had arrived in Birmingham with one racing shoe that was the wrong size. "I actually brought two different sized shoes," said Donnelly. "I tried them on last night and thought, 'The right one does not feel right'. I had to call my parents and my boyfriend, and they literally ran to the start about half an hour before."

The chief executive of UK Athletics, Jack Buckner, reflected with some pride on the championships despite those empty seats on the first three nights at the Alexander Stadium.

"We worked really hard on the tickets," he said. "We did work with schools and with community groups. Overall we've sold 73 per cent of the allocation, which I'd argue is a world-class job but I appreciate the expectation in this country is higher than that."

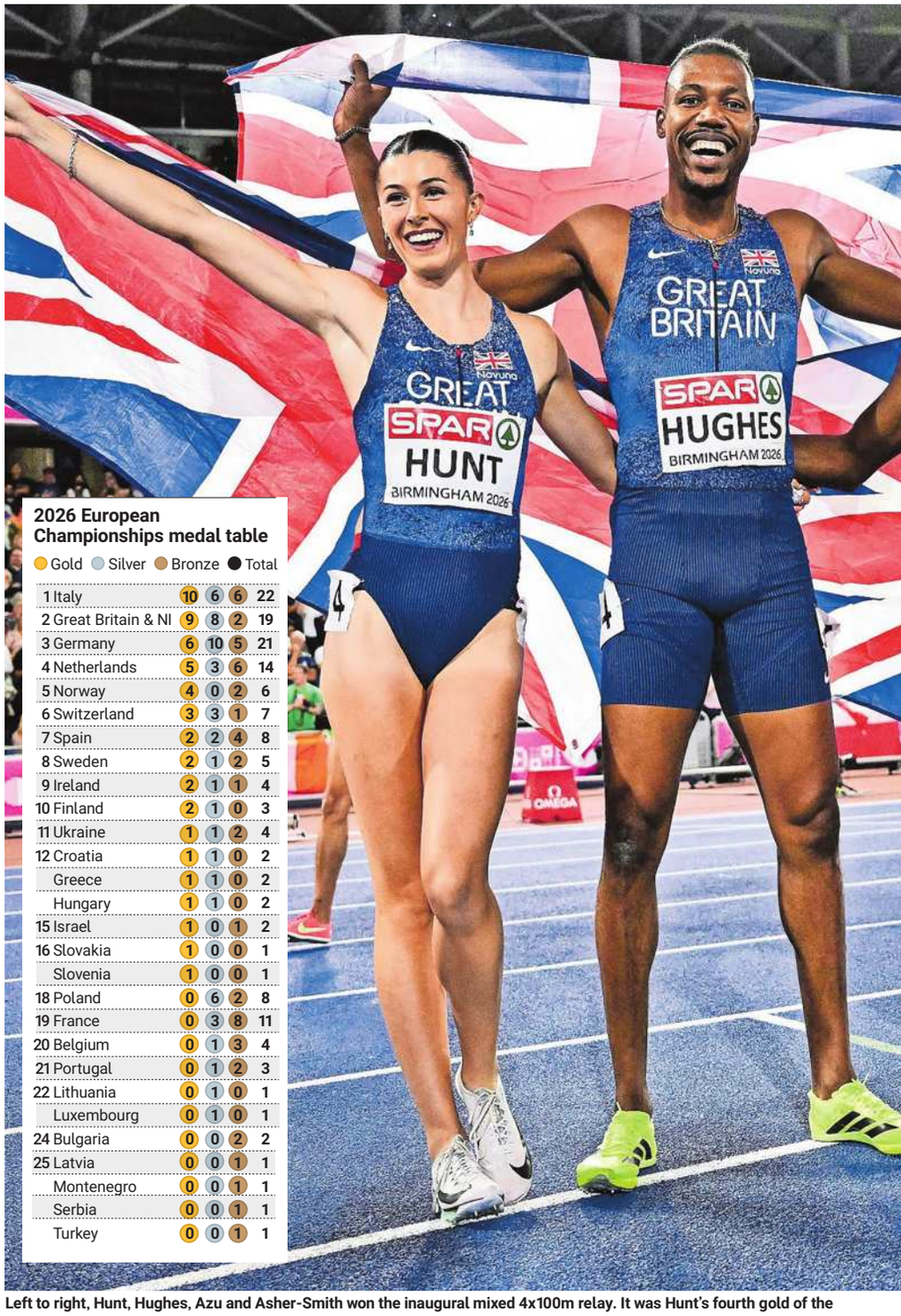
While he said it was too soon to know the precise figures, Buckner also said the event had been a financial success.

"Just to get a sense of things, the budget for the Commonwealth Games was £600 million when it was in Birmingham four years ago," he said. "The budget for the Games in Glasgow last month was £150 million. The budget for this is about £28 million. So it's an event that sits within a budget amount and will do really well on it.

"Traditionally these events lose money but with Athletic Ventures (the new joint venture between UKA, London Marathon and the Great Run company) we won't."

What thrilled Buckner most of all was the impact being made by his sport's individual stars.

"There's already lots of talk about BBC Sports Personality (of the Year), with these icons we have," he said. "We have Keely, obviously, and now Amy, and obviously Josh Kerr and Georgia too. They are all cutting through to much bigger audiences, and hopefully the sport grows as a result."



2026 European Championships medal table

	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1 Italy	10	6	6	22
2 Great Britain & NI	9	8	2	19
3 Germany	6	10	5	21
4 Netherlands	5	3	6	14
5 Norway	4	0	2	6
6 Switzerland	3	3	1	7
7 Spain	2	2	4	8
8 Sweden	2	1	2	5
9 Ireland	2	1	1	4
10 Finland	2	1	0	3
11 Ukraine	1	1	2	4
12 Croatia	1	1	0	2
Greece	1	1	0	2
Hungary	1	1	0	2
15 Israel	1	0	1	2
16 Slovakia	1	0	0	1
Slovenia	1	0	0	1
18 Poland	0	6	2	8
19 France	0	3	8	11
20 Belgium	0	1	3	4
21 Portugal	0	1	2	3
22 Lithuania	0	1	0	1
Luxembourg	0	1	0	1
24 Bulgaria	0	0	2	2
25 Latvia	0	0	1	1
Montenegro	0	0	1	1
Serbia	0	0	1	1
Turkey	0	0	1	1

Left to right, Hunt, Hughes, Azu and Asher-Smith won the inaugural mixed 4x100m relay. It was Hunt's fourth gold of the

Man arrested after armed police

Matt Lawton

Hundreds of athletes and coaches were caught up in a huge security operation involving armed police at the European Athletics Championships in Birmingham late on Saturday, with their return to the team hotel delayed by more than two hours.

Athletes, many of whom competed again last night, started queueing for official buses at 10.15pm but did not make it back to their team hotels in the city centre until 12.45am.

"Fortunately they kept the kitchens open for the athletes," one team official said. It is understood police had to perform security searches of the buses before passengers were allowed to board.

West Midlands police said a man in his thirties was "arrested on suspicion of fraud" at about 8.15pm on Saturday after being found in an area of Alexander Stadium with the wrong accreditation. He remains in custody for questioning, with event organisers forced to postpone the six medal ceremonies scheduled for Saturday night until yesterday. The police confirmed there was no immediate risk to the public.

After a capacity crowd of 23,000 witnessed both British sprint relay teams claim gold, fans complained of chaotic scenes on social media while

week for Britain

BEN STANSALL/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

week and Asher-Smith's 11th European Championships medal of her career

Matt Lawton's European Championship highlights

Box office Amy
Amy Hunt followed victory in the 200m by borrowing a line from *Gladiator*. "Are you not entertained?" she roared at a television camera. She also then revealed how her dad, Pete, is a fan of the movie too and says "strength and honour" to her before every race. It was pure Alan Partridge, but very amusing.

Never write off Ingebrigtsen
Jakob Ingebrigtsen's 5,000m win. He had not run for 11 months thanks to surgery on his achilles and, after three kilometres of the race, even the BBC commentators were doubting his ability to make an impact after such a long absence. But the Norwegian, below, produced a stunning late burst to capture gold for a seventh European title, revealing afterwards that he was even less confident than the TV commentary team.

An 800m race for the ages
Keely Hodgkinson was bitterly disappointed not to win a third straight European title but there was a point in the women's two-lap contest which had echoes of some great moments in middle-distance running history. The sight of Audrey Werro, Hodgkinson and Femke Broeders-Bol coming off that final bend very much reminded me of Seb Coe, Steve Cram and Tom McKean in Stuttgart in 1986. What a fascinating few years it promises to be.

Rapid delivery
As Hunt was quick to point out after capturing her third gold medal of the week, she was joined by three extraordinary women in winning the 4x100m relay by more than a second. Success Eduan is about to graduate with a degree in midwifery and she was asked afterwards what was more difficult: delivering the baton to Imani-Lara Lansiquot or a baby? "A baby!" she declared. "Someone's life is in my hands."

hold athletes in stadium for hours

the athletes, coaches and officials were told to return to the high performance centre at the Alexander Stadium.

A statement on the event's official account, posted on X at 11.03pm on Saturday, said: "We apologise for the significant delays in leaving the Alexander Stadium venue this evening.

"Buses and coaches will start to arrive and departures will begin to gradually take place. We thank you for your patience with this matter. Please listen to the instructions from the safety personnel and marshals who are there to support you."

In the early hours of yesterday Birmingham 2026 issued a further statement, which read: "Birmingham 2026 can confirm that transport operations have returned to normal following a police incident on Saturday evening.

"Championship transport was suspended until the necessary security measures had been carried out while West Midlands police arrested a man in his thirties on suspicion of fraud.

"The safety and wellbeing of our spectators, athletes, workforce and the wider championships family will always be our first priority.

"We recognise that the delays presented challenges for those affected and would like to thank everyone for their patience, understanding and co-operation throughout the evening."

Women steal show as Brits top medal table

Swimming
Craig Lord

Great Britain's swimmers were treated to a rare VIP night out in Paris last night after emerging from seven days of fierce racing at the European Swimming Championships as the continent's powerhouse of the pool, atop the medals table with eight golds.

Whereas the men's team have led the rise in the ranks of the swimming elite during the past decade, it was the women who stole the show in Paris, with curtain-closing triumphs for Keanna Macinnes in the 200m butterfly and then a second gold shared with team-mates Lauren Cox, Angharad Evans and Freya Colbert in the 4x100m medley.

Those two golds not only added up to "5½ wins to the women over 2½ for the men", as Colbert put it, the halves accounted for a mixed relay. The final flurry of medals ended Italy's hopes of overhauling Britain on gold count.

Macinnes set the tone, with gold and a career-best time of 2min 5.90sec the rewards for setting a blistering pace early in the race and then fending off Denmark's Helena Bach by 0.1sec at the touch. An hour later, Macinnes was dashing to her blocks again with her medley team-mates. Cox handed over on backstroke in fourth place, a second off the pace of the star of the Italian team and world-record setter on backstroke this week, Sara Curtis. Two lengths of breaststroke later, Evans had clawed back the deficit with a 1:03.75 split, the second-fastest ever in a relay. Macinnes then held her ground on butterfly and handed over to Colbert 0.2sec behind the Italians. Two lengths of freestyle later, Colbert secured gold 0.1sec to the good.

The women also won gold in the 4x100m medley

Before the last session of finals started, head coach Steve Tigg had talked about the success of the "Britain Bounce", a deliberate plan to ask home nations to swim tough at the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow but tougher in Paris two weeks later. The idea had been to make this year, mid-Olympic cycle, a hard double-event test as part of preparation to get them to LA 2028 "the strongest they can possibly be".

Maccines was a case in point and explained that part of her preparation had been to race a solo event and a relay at every competition in the past two years to make sure she could handle the double come the big occasion.

"It's been such a male-dominated sport in the last couple Olympic cycles, and so for us to come back to Paris two years on from the Olympics and really perform as a group of girls is really, really special," Colbert said. "We've had British records falling left, right, and centre for the girls."

Macinnes' solo and relay golds on the last day matched the same result in Paris for Evans, who made history by becoming the first British woman to win the 100m breaststroke title before adding silver in the 200m to follow double Commonwealth Games gold at home in Glasgow.

Maresca wants fresh faces

CONTINUED FROM BACK

arrive the better because we are starting the Premier League in one week and if they start to work with us as soon as possible it's better that they can also understand the way we want to play," Maresca said.

City are also in discussions with Tottenham Hotspur over the sale of Savinho, whom they value at £85 million.

Maresca, who succeeded Pep Guardiola, is not panicking after yesterday's heavy defeat. "It's just the beginning, we have many things that we need to do better," he said. "I think the reaction was good after the first goal and now try to reset and analyse the game and think from Tuesday about the next game."

Mikel Arteta, the Arsenal manager, said his players were hungry to win successive league titles. "We've never done it at this football club, so we know that it's going to demand something special and we are ready," Arteta said.

Villa to sign £25.6m Suzuki

Football
Gary Jacob

Aston Villa have agreed a £25.6 million deal, plus £4.28 million in add-ons, for the Parma and Japan goalkeeper Zion Suzuki, who could replace Emiliano Martínez.

Martínez's proposed move to Juventus has collapsed due Villa wanting £8.6 million for the Argentina goalkeeper who will turn 34 next month. He has a contract until 2029, worth about £150,000 a week.

The Italian club have revived interest in Tottenham Hotspur's Guglielmo Vicario. It is not clear if it is a strategy to force Villa to reduce the price they want for Martínez.

Villa have been in talks to sign Suzuki after his proposed move to Paris Saint-Germain stalled over agent fees. Suzuki, 23, was a target for West Ham United last summer. Villa also monitored James Trafford before he joined Leeds United from Manchester City earlier this month.

Suzuki had a three-year plan to sign for a big club, passing up a move to Manchester United and working in the gym to add muscle to his 6ft 3in frame. Back in 2023 he was second choice for Urawa Reds when the club received an offer for him to join United for about £4 million. His decision to stay caused a stir in Japan, but he wanted a slower trajectory. Instead Suzuki moved to Sint-Truiden in Belgium, initially on loan, where his performances earned him a £7.8 million move to Parma in 2024. Suzuki became the first Japan footballer to weigh 100kg (15st 10lb) at this summer's World Cup, where he made four appearances.

City's weak midfield is torn apart by Arsenal

Arsenal *Calafiori 1, Havertz 28, Odegaard 48*	**3**
Manchester City	**0**

Paul Hirst

With 48 minutes of this so-called contest gone, every Arsenal supporter looked up at the giant screens hanging above the pitch at the Principality Stadium and reacted in awe.

Each time they saw a replay of Gianluigi Donnarumma throwing himself to the ground after buying a dummy sold to him by Martin Odegaard, they shouted "olé" before the Norway international rolled the ball into the goalkeeper's net, taking the score to 3-0 in Arsenal's favour.

Laughter, derision and mockery were the order of the day for those who had ventured to Cardiff from north London.

Originally the Arsenal fans may have been miffed that they had had to travel to Wales, rather than to Wembley because the national stadium was hosting a concert, but those who made the journey west were happy that they had done so as their team served up a reminder of their strengths.

Ultimately this trophy will mean little if Arsenal do not go on and win the Premier League, but here they showed their rivals just how strong they must be to dethrone Mikel Arteta's side.

This was a meeting between one well-oiled team with a couple of new parts and another getting to grips with the demands of their new manager.

Arsenal bared their teeth in the first half, bullying City into submission with a mixture of physicality and skill.

No star shone brighter than Odegaard. For most of last season's festivities Odegaard had to watch from the sidelines owing to injury, but here he was back to his nonchalant best, gliding through City's gaping midfield.

"I'm sure this year, if he can stay fit, we will see a different Martin. I sensed from the first day he joined that he has [fire] in the belly," Arteta said of the 27-year-old, who drew gasps from the crowd with a nutmeg of Elliot Anderson in the first half.

Riccardo Calafiori took only 24 seconds to beat Donnarumma after a delicious through-ball from Myles Lewis-Skelly, and after Kai Havertz had bundled in Arsenal's second, Odegaard got the goal his performance deserved.

City will, undoubtedly, improve under Enzo Maresca. The Italian is an excellent coach and the line-up for City after the transfer window closes will look different from the XI he put out here.

Rodri, who is set to join Barcelona after a £61 million bid was accepted by City, was left out of the squad, as was Savinho, a target of Spurs.

City's most glaring weakness was a lack of control in midfield. Odegaard ran the game but there was an assured display too from Bruno Guimarães, while Christos Tzolis also performed superbly in his first match.

Any pre-match optimism the City fans felt about the post-Pep Guardiola era evaporated inside a minute as Arsenal flew out of the starting gate, pushing Maresca's side high up the pitch. Twenty-five yards from goal Ben White squared the ball to Lewis-Skelly, who let the ball roll across him, drawing Phil Foden into a challenge, but the midfielder was too late. Lewis-Skelly was quicker and stronger, slotting a clever through-ball to Calafiori. The attacking full back left Rúben Dias flat-footed on the edge of the area and slid the ball past Donnarumma with his left foot after the Italian dived early.

City looked disjointed. Donnarumma's passing was awry. Jérémy Doku's cross sailed through the Arsenal area and out for a goal kick, much to the amusement of those in red behind the goal.

Finally, after 20 minutes, Foden tested David Raya with a skidding, low shot into the goalkeeper's arms.

Doku broke forward again but Gabriel slid in to prevent him from shooting and celebrated as if he had scored a goal.

Little was going City's way. Foden went into the book for trying to pull back Tzolis.

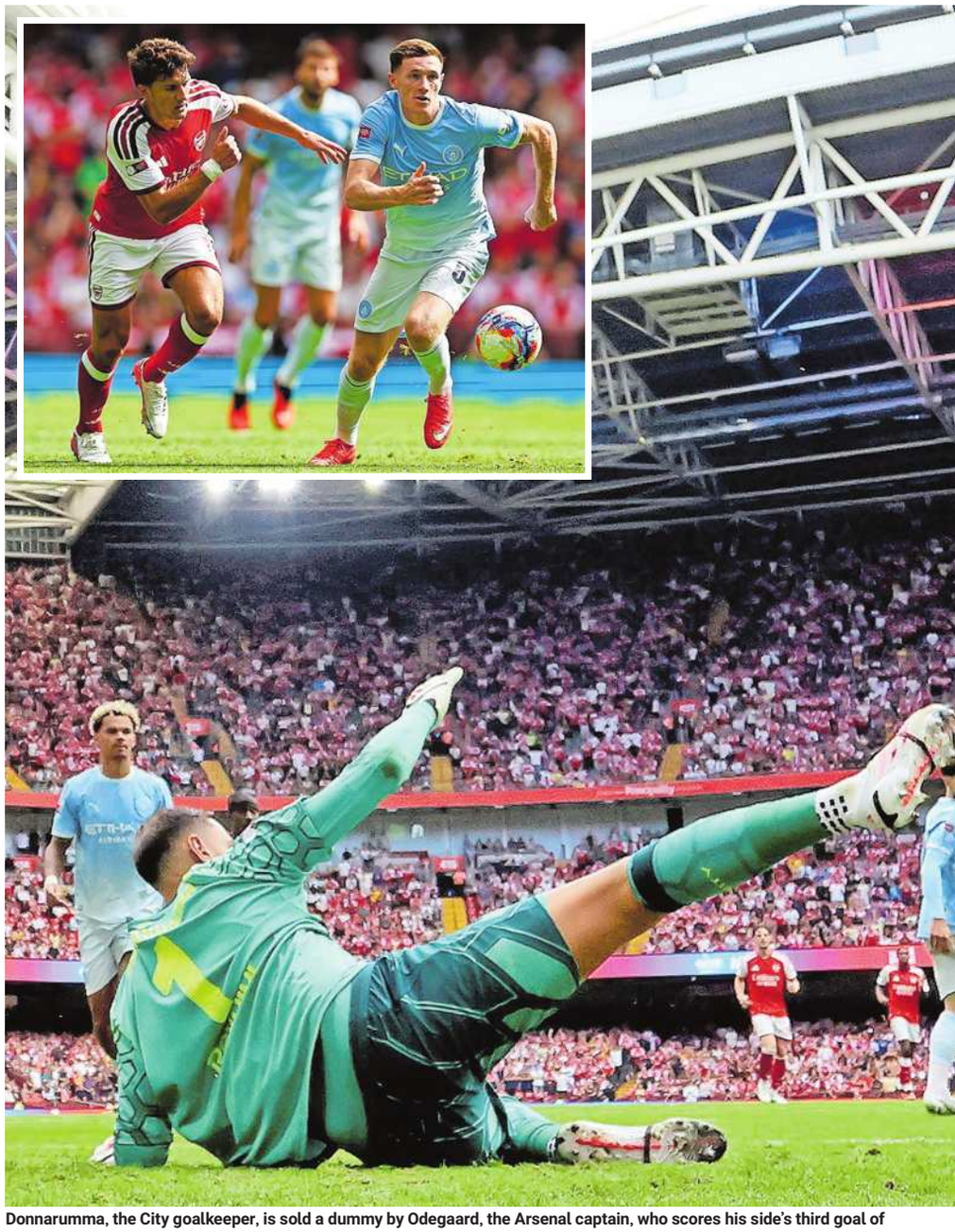
Arsenal were playing better football. They were far more fluid than their opponents, but City were not exactly making it hard for them and were guilty of playing walking football for Arsenal's second goal.

Doku stood off Noni Madueke for five seconds, allowing the winger to play inside to Odegaard, who only had to deal with a half-hearted attempt from Mateo Kovacic to close him down. The captain's cross found Tzolis, who headed back across the box for Havertz, who bundled the ball past a flapping Donnarumma.

Odegaard robbed Kovacic, Nico O'Reilly pinged a crossfield pass over Antoine Semenyo and Erling Haaland cleared the bar with a poor effort under pressure from Gabriel — everything was going wrong for City.

They threatened just before half-time, but Raya kept out a low shot from Haaland. A goalline clearance from Josko Gvardiol prevented Arsenal from scoring a third in stoppage time.

City fans wanted to see an improvement from their team after the break but they were left sorely disappointed. In the 48th minute Arsenal cut through City with ease. Tzolis came inside from the right flank past Abdukodir Khusanov and squared for Odegaard, who expertly moved past Gvardiol with his first touch, leaving him one on one with Donnarumma eight yards out.



Donnarumma, the City goalkeeper, is sold a dummy by Odegaard, the Arsenal captain, who scores his side's third goal of

The City supporters behind the goal braced themselves for a shot from the Arsenal captain, but he paused for a second, waiting for Donnarumma to dive, which he did, leaving Odegaard with an easy finish.

Jack Grealish, on at half-time despite being up for sale, and Omar Marmoush, who replaced Haaland eight minutes later, offered little and Anderson made way for Rico Lewis on the hour to chants of "what a waste of money" from the Arsenal fans.

Rayan Cherki replaced Foden on the hour too, but none of the substitutes could open Arsenal up.

City were lucky that Arteta's side eased off towards the end of the second half, otherwise they could have been on the end of an even bigger hiding.

Arsenal (4-2-3-1): D Raya — B White, Gabriel, C Mosquera, R Calafiori (P Hincapié 60min) — B Guimarães (D Rice 46), M Lewis-Skelly (M Zubimendi 75) — N Madueke (B Saka 60), M Odegaard (E Eze 84), C Tzolis — K Havertz (V Gyokeres 75). **Booked** Calafiori, Odegaard.
Manchester City (4-2-3-1): G Donnarumma — A Khusanov, R Dias, J Gvardiol, N O'Reilly (M Guéhi 54) — M Kovacic (N González 79), E Anderson (R Lewis 60) — A Semenyo, P Foden (R Cherki 60), J Doku (J Grealish 46) — E Haaland (O Marmoush 53) **Booked** Foden, Gvardiol.
Referee S Barrott. **Attendance** 58,056.

Tzolis may not be star but he's still an upgrade

Gary Jacob

Arsenal's great sides have often been blessed with good wingers and this summer they have been trying to sign a superstar to occupy the left flank.

Their fan base went into meltdown over the club's failure to land either Morgan Rogers, a rising England performer who moved to Chelsea for £117 million from Aston Villa, or Vinícius Jr, a global icon who signed a lucrative new deal to stay at Real Madrid.

Yet for a fraction of the cost of those proposed moves, Arsenal have upgraded with the arrival of Christos Tzolis for £34 million from Club Bruges. The Greece winger replaced another value-for-money signing in Leandro Trossard, who left for Besiktas for £17 million, not far off what the Belgium winger cost the club.

Tzolis, 24, is likely to be the support option in time, if Arsenal can sign that special player in this transfer window. But for now he is providing inspiration and impetus and is likely to surprise many people who recalled him struggling for minutes under different coaches on the way to relegation with Norwich City in 2021. He learnt and matured from those experiences, scoring 43 goals and claiming 45 assists for Bruges over two seasons and was the player of the year in May, albeit in a weaker league.

Tzolis continued his pre-season form, recording two assists in the 3-0 win over Manchester City in the Community Shield — the first player to do so in this curtain-raiser since David Beckham for Manchester United against Newcastle United in 1996.

"He makes the right decision when a lot of people rush and make the wrong decisions," Mikel Arteta said. "He is very smart and accurate. In tight spaces he made the right decision twice. He's really consistent in everything he does."

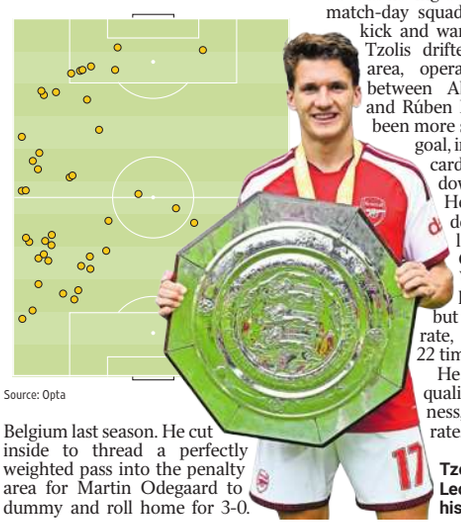
Tzolis ghosted in at the far post to loop a header with just the right power and height to clear a defender for Kai Havertz to head in for 2-0. But his second assist resembled what he did in

CARL RECINE/GETTY IMAGES

the game in Cardiff. Tzolis challenges Anderson, inset, who struggled to make an impact in Maresca's new-look midfield

Balance on the left

Tzolis, who was the only Arsenal attacker to play the whole game, divided his 42 touches evenly between his own half and City's, where he claimed two assists.



Source: Opta

Belgium last season. He cut inside to thread a perfectly weighted pass into the penalty area for Martin Odegaard to dummy and roll home for 3-0. Last season, he claimed seven assists after coming off the left and playing a pass with his right foot.

Tzolis likes to dribble with the ball close to his feet, in contrast to his teammate Gabriel Martinelli, who is likely to be sold having been omitted from the match-day squad, and who tends to kick and wants to use his speed. Tzolis drifted into the penalty area, operating in the space between Abdukodir Khusanov and Rúben Dias. He might have been more selfish with a sight of goal, instead playing in Riccardo Calafiori, who went down and was booked. He scored via a slight deflection from a similar position against Girona in a friendly. With Bruges he had a lot of licence to shoot but was not always accurate, despite scoring 22 times last season.

He has said that his best qualities are his directness, creativity and work rate. He topped the fitness charts at Arsenal partly because he returned to training early and Greece were not at the World Cup finals. His metrics led a fitness coach to nickname him "Leonidas", a figure from Ancient Greece celebrated in the film *300* and played by Gerard Butler.

Tzolis is referred to as Leonidas because of his high fitness levels

If there was any doubt, Tzolis also ticked the box for one of Arsenal's strengths in recent seasons. Last season almost a third of his 29 assists across competitions were from set pieces: eight from corners and another from a free kick.

Over the years Arsenal have had Robert Pires, Marc Overmars, Anders Limpar, Brian Marwood and George Armstrong. They all helped Arsenal to win the title, playing with different styles from the left flank. Limpar and Marwood fashioned chances for Alan Smith, Pires dovetailed with Thierry Henry, and Overmars fed Ian Wright and Nicolas Anelka.

Tzolis has likened himself to one of the club's more recent forwards, Alexis Sánchez, who liked to cut inside and aim for the far corner, but was not part of a title-winning side. Tzolis already appears to have developed an understanding with Havertz and could have another forward to aim at soon if Arsenal can upgrade on Viktor Gyokeres.

Flemming strikes as West Ham throw away two-goal lead

Burnley *Flemming 83 (pen), 90+2*	**2**
West Ham United *Kilman 10, Solomon 72*	**2**

Sky Bet Championship
Mike Whalley

West Ham United fans can look on the bright side: at least their issues on the pitch may distract from their dramas off it.

Not that Nuno Espírito Santo was in much of a mood to be positive as his team threw away a victory after being 2-0 up with seven minutes left.

Max Kilman's tenth-minute far-post header looked to have set up a win in their first Championship match for 14 years.

Even though they then had a couple of second-half scares when Zian Flemming first headed against the post and was then denied by an Oliver Scarles goalline clearance after deflecting a corner towards goal with his shoulder, Nuno's side looked to have the quality to see the game through.

Manor Solomon's debut goal, swept high into the net from close range with 18 minutes to go, ought to have seen the game out. That it did not was thanks to two late Flemming goals — increasing his chances of a move back to the Premier League before the transfer window closes — which left Nuno reflecting on the fact that his squad needs strengthening.

Scarles conceded the penalty that allowed Flemming to bring Burnley back into the game, by tripping Marcus Edwards.

A team who have lost Mateus Fernandes and Crysencio Summerville this summer need more reinforcements offensively too, and Nuno knows it. "We need players, especially in the offensive part of the team," he said. "We have young lads, we have options at full back, but we need more bodies in the offensive part of the team

"The club knows the targets and the needs of the team. We are working very hard and trying to get the bodies in as soon as possible."

The head coach's decision to stay on after relegation was a major boost for a club who have been rocked by boardroom troubles throughout the spring and summer. If they are to turn their status as Championship favourites into tangible success, however, they need to be better at seeing out matches than this. "It's disappointing," Nuno added. "After we scored the second goal, I think we should have done better to keep the result."

Flemming was Burnley's standout player, from the moment he swept over a Jacob Bruun Larsen cross in the opening minutes to the calm finish to equalise in the second minute of stoppage time. Nicky Hayen, the Burnley head coach, acknowledges that it will be tough to keep hold of last season's top scorer, who is interested in returning to the Premier League.

"It didn't help that he scored two times today," Hayen admitted. "But the way we play suits him, so maybe it's best for him to stay."

How they stand

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
QPR	1	1	0	0	3	1	2	3
Millwall	1	1	0	0	2	0	2	3
Swansea	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
West Bromwich	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
Bolton	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
Charlton	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
Middlesbrough	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
Watford	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
Blackburn	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	1
West Ham	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	1
Burnley	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	1
Wolverhampton	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	1
Birmingham	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Sheffield Utd	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Cardiff	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wrexham	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Derby	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
Lincoln City	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
Preston	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
Norwich	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
Stoke	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
Portsmouth	1	0	0	1	1	3	-2	0
Bristol City	1	0	0	1	0	2	-2	0
Southampton*	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	-4

*deducted 4pts for breaching league rules

Southampton outfought as Watford win feisty opener

Watford *Bravo 12, Nabizada 29*	**2**
Southampton *Larin 56*	**1**

Ivan Speck

If Southampton had thought that they could use their sense of injustice over Spygate to spur them on to promotion, this defeat away by Watford in their opening Championship game will have brought them closer to reality.

Perhaps the fact the Southampton team coach reversed into a barrier outside Vicarage Road should have been a clue that this was not going to be their day. Tonda Eckert's side were simply outhustled by a hungrier team.

Watford have been thrown together by new head coach Alessio Dionisi, yet at every turn three or four of those dressed in yellow surrounded a Southampton player in possession.

The home side collected six bookings in the process but first-half goals from summer signing Iker Bravo and exciting academy product Amin Nabizada — 21 and 19 respectively — proved too much for Southampton to overcome.

They pulled one back when Cyle Larin slid home a Cameron Bragg pass just before the hour but could not find an equaliser.

When Taylor Harwood-Bellis, the Southampton defender who baited Middlesbrough players during the play-off semi-final second leg in May, sent a stoppage-time shot woefully wide, plenty of Watford players let him know what they think of him.

Players squared up to each other on numerous occasions, while the Watford fans were happy to chant "cheats" at the opposition at every opportunity.

Eckert would not be drawn on the hostility faced by him and his team.

"The boys are as close as they have ever been and completely united as a group," he said. "Obviously, communications are going on between the club and the FA in the background, but once you step on to the grass either for a training session or the sidelines, it is what it is, all of that disappears."

Sport

Australia humbled

Pat Cummins' side stunned at home by Bangladesh

Page 51

Mike Atherton

The 77mph seamer with better Test average than Wasim

Page 50

Wonder women

Georgia Hunter Bell, centre, wins gold in women's 1,500m as Amy Hunt, right, claims record four gold medals in one European Championships, while Dina Asher-Smith, left, secures 11th medal to become most successful athlete in history of this competition. Report, pages 52-53

City accept Barça's £61m Rodri offer

Paul Hirst

Rodri is closing in on a move to Barcelona after Manchester City accepted an offer worth about £61 million for the Spain captain.

After weeks of negotiations, the two clubs reached a breakthrough over the weekend and the 30-year-old midfielder is set to move to the Spanish champions provided that he passes a medical.

City accepted an offer of £51 million, with another £10 million in add-ons.

He is set to fly to the Catalan capital in the coming days and could be presented to the club's fans before Barcelona's friendly against Al-Ahly at the Nou Camp on Wednesday.

Rodri arrived at City from Atletico Madrid in a £63 million deal in 2019. Under Pep Guardiola's tutelage, Rodri became the best player in his position in the world. In 2024, he won the Ballon d'Or.

He became a firm fans' favourite at City, especially after scoring the winner in the 2023 Champions League final against Inter Milan, and won 13 trophies during his time at the club.

Rodri, who had one year left on his contract, told City earlier this summer that he wanted to leave and initially pondered a move to Real Madrid before Barcelona entered the race for his signature.

He was left out of the City squad for Sunday's 3-0 defeat by Arsenal in the Community Shield.

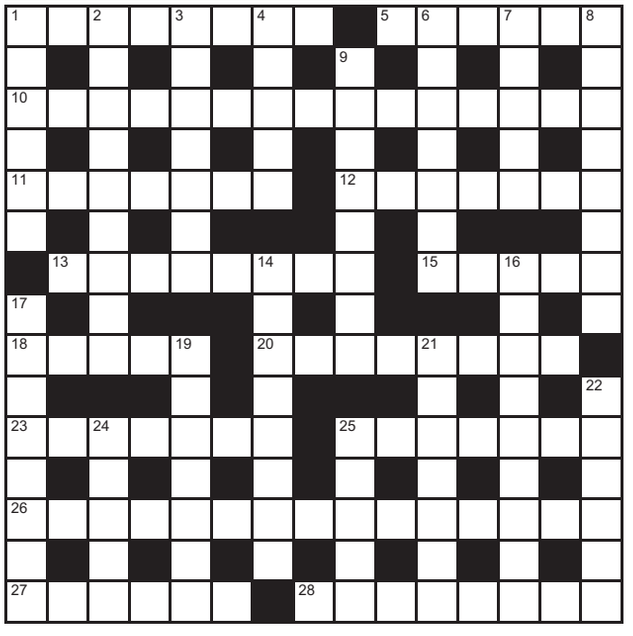
News of Rodri's departure came hours after Enzo Maresca urged his superiors to add more new faces to his City squad.

Maresca wants to add more steel to his midfield with the signings of Enzo Fernández, Chelsea's £120 million-rated player, and Lille's £85 million man Ayyoub Bouaddi.

"Any new signing, the sooner they

Continued on page 53

Times Crossword 29,623



ACROSS

1 Hint about desire, dropping head in mischievous way (8)
5 Source of wisdom, core of work by expert absorbing learner (6)
10 Jostling on a train, up to its full capacity level (10,5)
11 Intensify act of punishment, losing power to capture hearts (7)
12 Love getting into story about soldier (7)
13 Possibly rib hero, reportedly very lazy (4,4)
15 Church seen in profitable aspect (5)
18 Crooked request we rejected (5)
20 Examination endlessly clean and minute (8)
23 Outrage going round about habit? (7)
25 Kip in small cabin unknown in middle of freeze (7)
26 Actors, mostly isolated by good playwright holding party, have lasting influence (4,1,4,6)
27 Lack thread to spin (6)
28 Twit's taken aback by poet's name for fish (8)

DOWN

1 Part of foot I note and measure (6)
2 Implement persuasive proposal aimed at kids primarily (9)
3 Odd stone assortment (7)
4 Nimble and cheerful, dismissing opener (5)
6 Copy of criticism (7)
7 Fragment containing right sound of bird (5)
8 Unabridged condition in statement I retyped (8)
9 Stupid person nearly damaged water pumps? (8)
14 Ban I had, climbing tree (8)
16 Fraud with offer for candidate (9)
17 Poor weapon stops having weight evenly distributed (8)
19 Call for conflict and speak wildly (7)
21 Temper from thug one maddened (7)
22 River delta far south of Maine (6)
24 Italian food in former time first-class (5)
25 Spot quote in speech (5)

Prize solution 29,616

Check today's answers by ringing 0905 757 0141 by midnight. Calls cost £1 per minute plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke 0333 202 3390.

The winners of Prize Crossword No 29,616 are
P Campbell, Norwich, Norfolk
D Lauener, Edinburgh
G Riordan, Carneddi, Gwynedd
A Wheeler, Yatton, Somerset
R Whiteman, St Andrews, Fife

Newspapers support recycling
The recycled paper content of UK newspapers in 2024 was 34.7%

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TIMES 2

August 17 | **2026**

I tried the Maga diet

Did eating like JD Vance and RFK Jr turn me into a colossal windbag?

by Damian Whitworth

Prince Harry wants to come home more. Here's how that one plays out...

Kevin Maher

JUSTIN TALLIS/GETTY IMAGES

Prince Harry in the UK last month

To the tune of *Three Lions* by David Baddiel, Frank Skinner and The Lightning Seeds... "He's coming home! He's coming home! He's coming, Harry's coming home!" Yes, six long years of hurt never stopped us dreaming, and now it seems that, according to "a source close to Harry", the prodigal prince plans to spend "more and more" time in the UK, reports The Sunday Times, following his successful reunion with the King last month.

The source claims the Duke of Sussex is currently happy with the "template" for his UK trips, now that they're not "obscured by the other nonsense". The "other nonsense" presumably being last year's failed legal challenge against the government over his security, after which any future visit to the UK was "impossible"? Or does that "other nonsense" concern this year's failed legal battle against Associated Newspapers Limited?

Point being, Harry's change of mind is good news. If we've learnt anything from this summer's blockbuster *The Odyssey*, it's that one of the most ancient drivers of human behaviour is the urge to return home. And though the parallels with Matt Damon's King Odysseus don't entirely fit (Harry is, after all, and how could we forget, the "spare"), there is obvious allegorical potency in the concept of a royal anti-hero being prevented from reaching the beloved shores of his Ithaca (or his Albion) by the powers of the seductive witch Circe aka Meghan. For Meghan is indeed Circe-like and, as she proved in her Netflix series *With Love, Meghan*, she can show her magical gifts at any moment by transforming Trader Joe's peanut butter pretzel nuggets into a "customised" (plastic) bedside snack bag for her guests. One bite and you can never leave?

The "hero who returns home to a changed land" is a film genre unto itself (see everything from *Tomorrow is Forever* to *Sommersby* to *Dead Man's Shoes*), but it bears a special resonance for Harry's situation. I am haunted, for instance, by the doorcam photograph, from last summer, of Harry trying to find an old friend in west London. He is alone, with a phone up to his ear, looking beleaguered as he buzzes, it transpires, at the wrong address. Witnesses said that he tried three different doors, seemingly attempting to make contact with the past.

It reminds me, of course it does, of Ewan McGregor as reformed drug addict Renton in *T2 Trainspotting*, returning home to Edinburgh, to all his favourite spots, but finding his world utterly changed, eerie and ghost-like. I can't help but picture Harry, in his many upcoming trips, floating around Mayfair alone in the small hours, and pointing to an empty restaurant and saying aloud to no one in particular, "This is where I punched that photographer in 2004!" Or standing outside a misty mansion in Wiltshire, announcing, "And in there's where I wore the Nazi costume at that party!" Or gesturing towards the kitchen of Nottingham Cottage at Kensington Palace and saying, "And that's where Willy broke my necklace and hurled me down onto the dog bowl after calling Meghan 'difficult' 'rude' and 'abrasive.'"

The point of *T2 Trainspotting* was life moves on and holding grudges about the past will only bring you misery in the end. If Harry really is planning to return "more and more" to the UK then maybe he has, finally, learned that lesson. Have we?

A Bond casting 'boregasm'

Speaking of movies and misery... will someone please tell the makers of the new James Bond movie, and soon, that they need to kill this interminable game of "giddy and very exciting" (for whom exactly?) casting speculation. It's been five years since Daniel Craig quit the series with *No Time to Die* and since then we've been subjected to an agonisingly protracted and supremely idiotic game of Guess Who?. Here, it seems, everyone from Count Binface to That Little Puff the TikTok cat has been AI-rendered in a white tuxedo under the headline, "Is this the new Bond?"

The latest insult arrives as the, sigh, "final round" (fingers crossed) of casting begins and it takes the form of marketing rumours about how 007-friendly brands such as Omega watches and Johnnie Walker whisky have "anointed" their own preferred candidates, including Callum Turner and Aaron Taylor-Johnson. It's tedious, cynical and pointless and is beginning to make the entire endeavour seem inherently cheap and tacky. It's as if, I dunno, a once beloved and venerable spy franchise had been taken over by a soulless online retailer. Oh, wait...

Playboy? I won't hop to it

To the delight of teenage boys with no wifi yet tons of pocket money, Playboy magazine is back! And it's only £30 an issue. And this time you can definitely read it for the articles, because the first edition features a report from a tech utopia in Honduras. Plus the magazine now boasts its first openly gay editor-in-chief, Phillip Picardi, as well as the first open lesbian, Cara Delevingne, to grace the cover. Even better, Picardi says that hopefully the magazine will help "destigmatise male sexuality" and has included glossy and lovingly photographed images of semi-nude lady playmates for the delectation of eager magazine buyers. And why will I not be one of these lucky purchasers? Well, because I'm not a perv.

How to raise a billionaire's child so they don't blow their fortune

The offspring of the super-rich aren't as lucky as it might seem, Michael Cole, co-founder of a members-only group for them, tells Julia Llewellyn Smith

It's hard when your parents are worth hundreds of millions of pounds. School friends are jealous. You're always expected to pick up the tab. Drink and drugs are constant temptations. If you try to follow in your mother and/or father's footsteps you'll be mocked as "nepo". Worst of all, no one wants to hear you complain. Just imagine, for a moment, what it must be like to walk in Brooklyn Peltz-Beckham's shoes.

"I get it," Michael Cole says. "I mean, 'Oh, woe is me to be a rich kid.' But there's a lot of pressure on these people that is unique to them. 'How do I make friends and how do I know my friends like me for me as opposed to what my name is? How do I find a date? How do I select a spouse and make sure they're with me because of who I am, not what my family does?'"

Cole, 66, knows all about how money shapes family psychologies. He is a co-founder of R360, an invitation-only membership "community" for families with ultra-high net worths (UHNW), focused on preserving multigenerational wealth. He is also the son of a chief executive who made, and then lost, a fortune.

Growing up in Connecticut, Cole lived "in a very big house with a tennis court, a swimming pool, five acres of land. When I was 15 I was driven to an exclusive private school by a driver every day." But then his father quit his job, started his own business, over-leveraged and his wealth vanished. "By the time I turned 16 my dad was driving a taxi in Boston."

The next few years, Cole says, "were tough. My two siblings and I were scared, our parents' marriage broke down — at times we couldn't pay our college fees." Ultimately it was his bond with his siblings that helped him to get through the trauma and sowed a conviction that "wealth is about more than money"; in other words, what really matters is strong family bonds and a sense of purpose. "My family's experience was identity-shaking. Now we help our members' children forge their own identity."

This philosophy solidified during a long career at Merrill Lynch, Wells Fargo and the like in the "family wealth" space, advising UHNW families on how to preserve their fortunes while ensuring the next generation didn't spaff it away on cocaine and Ferraris, which led to Cole writing a bestseller, *More Than Money*. "I realised my job was not just about managing wealth but about managing the impact of wealth," he says from his home in Austin, Texas.

In 2020 Cole and another wealth-management veteran, Charlie Garcia, established R360 to help members to become "intentional wealth stewards": using their money to improve the world rather than, say, spending it on £40 million four-day weddings in Venice, and sending your wife and her famous friends into space in a rocket.

The company, Cole says, has a membership of about 200 families, each worth an average of £375 million. They are all based in the US, although R360 plans to expand to allow a maximum of 1,000 worldwide: 500 in the US and 500 outside. An initial three-year membership fee, which covers an entire family, costs £134,000; thereafter the annual renewal is £22,000.

Although R360 requires prospective members to have at least £75 million in assets, cash alone doesn't guarantee entry. Apparently, when R360 launched, 60 of the 70 families who wished to sign up met the financial preconditions but only 15 were deemed to be in alignment with the group's philosophy.

Today candidates must receive supporting references from at least

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two group members, undergo a one-hour interview and submit to extensive background checks and a behavioural assessment. Although the application process is handled in strict confidence and no one has publicly admitted to being turned down, Cole says that at least two billionaires are among those who were rejected. How did they react to the thumbs down?

Cole shrugs. "Rejection is part of life."

Would the world's first trillionaire, Elon Musk, or Amazon's Jeff Bezos make the cut?

"We ask the same question of every potential member: are you here to make a difference, to grow and to leave a meaningful legacy?" Cole says. "If all someone cares about is making more money or living a luxurious lifestyle, that's great for them but that's not a fit with us. Our people want to use their wealth to live to their best purpose."

Of successful candidates, 85 per cent are first-generation wealthy, he says. Some left school with no qualifications. For most, making money wasn't the primary goal; rather, they thrived on the challenges of building a business. "They value grit, the journey and they want their kids to feel some of that as well."

Their role model is the 95-year-old billionaire Warren Buffett, who still lives in a five-bedroom property in his home town of Omaha, Nebraska, bought in 1958 for £23,000.

"He's a humble billionaire and you'd be surprised how humbly many of our members live," Cole says. "One of their greatest fears is creating an entitled next generation. They want to raise good humans."

Michael Cole

> "You'd be surprised how humbly many of our members live

Yet this next generation face few of the obstacles that motivated their parents. Studies show that children who grew up in affluence are far more likely to smoke, drink and take drugs than those from more "normal" backgrounds.

"I've seen tons of this in my professional history," Cole says. "When everything comes too easily to you, you are always trying to find something new to stimulate you."

R360's website highlights a 2012 article in Harvard Business Review that observed that over three generations only 10 per cent of family-owned businesses remain in private hands. Some fail dramatically, while others are sold for huge fortunes, only for the beneficiaries to let their wealth slip through their fingers. "Our members want to break that curse," Cole says.

One of their children's biggest problems is "big shadow syndrome": the knowledge they will never match their parents' success. We've witnessed David and Victoria Beckham encourage their son Brooklyn to pursue high-profile careers, first in photography, then cookery, only to be met with universal derision for his lack of talent in either area. Now parents and son are bitterly estranged.

"You're constantly looking up at your mum and dad and you never feel like you're good enough; that can lead to self-destructive behaviour," Cole says. "But your parents often had a lot of tailwinds to help them get where they are: luck, initiative, drive, timing. It's very rare that all those things come together twice. We try to have their children understand you have to find your own purpose, to redefine success, to change the rules and find your own journey."

To this end R360 runs retreats around the US to help these scions to plan a fulfilling future. The youngest to attend are aged between six and eight. "At that age you gamify a lot of it. We do a game called 'lemonade stands' where they build a business and learn how to think about business. We do an exercise around getting an allowance: you give some away, you save some, you spend some and you invest some. We help them understand not all kids are in the same circumstances as they are."

For older age groups (younger teenagers and 18-25s) the retreats offer the first opportunity for many to find peers who understand them. Issues discussed include what to do when school friends see headlines about

> "Meetings can get very emotional. Wealth can be very isolating

your dad selling a company for nine figures, how to holiday with friends who have far less money and how to spot hangers-on.

"Every kid is different but for some [family wealth] can create genuine anxiety," Cole says. "It's very cathartic for them to get together. They make friends who empathise, with whom they can open up about their struggles and build relationships where no one is trying to get anything out of each other except genuine friendship."

Another common problem is weeding out potential gold-diggers. Cole and his team advise on how to insist on a prenup or, as he calls it, a "property settlement", suggesting you blame your parents for the unromantic piece of paper, claiming they've stipulated no inheritance can happen without one.

R360 is also there to help these "nepos" ponder career options. "We talk about how you find purpose. The key is, if you want to be an author or a film-maker, or save kids in Africa, or be a philanthropist, then have a plan to be the best at it," he says. "Most of our members would support their kids emotionally and potentially financially if they are really trying to find meaning from their passion and have a plan with goals and milestones where they're accountable. The key is not doing [these things] as a hobby but with focus, dedication, execution." In other words don't expect to pursue your non-job on Daddy or Mummy's dime for ever.

Yet R360 exists just as much for the parents as their children. The organisation has chapters in cities such as Dallas, New York and Miami where members meet regularly to pour their hearts out to their ultra-high-net-worth peers.

"Meetings can get very emotional," Cole says. "Wealth can be very isolating. It's very difficult for our members to find like-minded people who identify with what they're going through. It's so important to them to have a place where they can drop their guard and have very open discussions in a place where no one has an agenda, nobody's trying to sell them anything. At R360 nobody is judging them because they've succeeded."

Cream tea at my local cat café? Never again

A crowd of tourists are gaping through the window of Stratford-upon-Avon's cat café. Like some sort of exclusive club, I've dropped £30 just to reserve a table for myself, my 12-year-old daughter Jemima, her friend Sylvia and my pal Becky.

The cat café concept originated in Taiwan in the late 1990s and is now apparently a worldwide phenomenon (there are at least 24 in the UK). This one has a vintage tearoom vibe, with hanging baskets, colourful teapots and kitsch feline artwork. It's home to eight sweet rescue cats who are, we're told, looking for their "for ever homes" but who seem underwhelmed by us.

Milking the Shakespeare connection for all it's worth, the cats — a mixture of regular moggies, ragdolls and a fluffy Persian — have names such as Horatio, Bottom and Hamlet. It's very warm inside, so most of them are asleep in bespoke built-in beds by the staircase.

We were warned when booking online that there were litter trays and as I go down the stairs to the loo the smell hits me. Don't get me wrong. I

GETTY IMAGES (POSED BY MODEL)

am a cat lover but paying to be a tourist and sit in a stuffy, cramped café surrounded by cats was not my idea. Pester power also persuaded me to visit one in Haarlem seven years ago when my daughter was five and my boys were both under ten. They have grown up with cats (Lady Marmalade, our tortoiseshell, rules the roost at home), so they know to be gentle, but the owner spent the whole time hovering anxiously around our table.

The café in Stratford won't accept children under ten and I can sort of understand why. Visitors are also banned from waking the cats up or using a flash to take a picture of them.

It is, in many ways, an admirable and entrepreneurial idea, giving animals who need a home a safe place to live, and the tables are full of families and a few American tourists who are lapping up (sorry) the cream teas and Hamlet Spritz (elderflower cordial topped with prosecco). There's one lady, probably in her forties like me, wearing a birthday badge, but as sparklers, candles and balloons are banned to maintain cat safety, there's nothing else to indicate it's her big day.

After paying, we wait for a waitress to let us out. The girls have enjoyed it but on a boiling day, with no windows or doors open, it has felt a bit like a hostage situation. This may be my last cat café visit. Why pay for something you can get free at home?

Georgina Fuller

Oh no, it's steak and sauerkraut again. I ate like the Maga crowd

It's the diet Trump's inner circle are said to swear by: protein, fermented food, not much else. Its creator, Sean O'Mara, promises that it works magic on your gut, but what was Damian Whitworth's experience?

Damian Whitworth. Right: Robert F Kennedy Jr, top, and JD Vance

Towards the end of my conversation with Sean O'Mara, the doctor who has advised JD Vance and other members of Donald Trump's cabinet to adopt a radical steak-and-sauerkraut diet, it becomes clear that he has been studying my image on the video call more closely than I suspected.

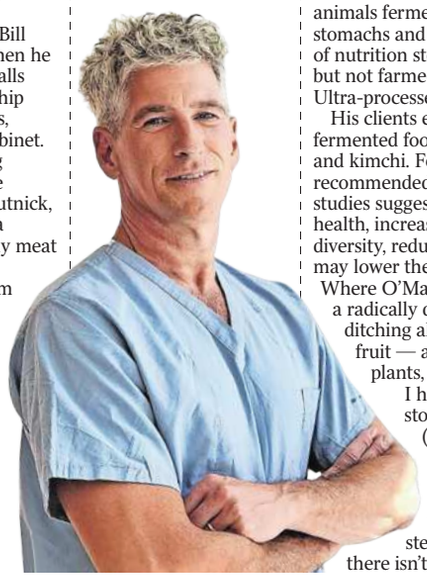
"You're a thin guy," he tells me. "But I guarantee, you've got fat around your heart. I can see it in your face."

Oh. Wow. What is it he sees in my face? "Puffiness," he says. He shows me images of a man with, I would like to think, a much puffier face than me. Then another image of him, a year later, looking lean and healthy. "Which guy do you want operating on you? Which guy do you want running your country? Which guy do you want to lead the Swat team when you need to be rescued? I make people look better and perform better," he says.

O'Mara, 63, a retired US army colonel, looked after previous American presidents, including Bill Clinton and George W Bush, when he was a military doctor. Now he calls himself a practitioner of leadership medicine for business executives, senators and members of the cabinet. He has reportedly been advising Vance, Robert F Kennedy Jr, the health secretary, and Howard Lutnick, the commerce secretary, to eat a modified carnivore diet of mostly meat and fermented foods.

He says he is unable to confirm reports in The Wall Street Journal and The New York Times about who his cabinet-level clients are, but notes that: "Secretary Kennedy looks better. The vice-president looks better. The better these people look, the better they can persuade [people], the higher performing they are. When you cut out processed foods and then start eating living foods — fermented foods — it has a dramatic impact on moving the dial in the direction of increasing health and away from declining health and disease. What attracted the senior leadership in the president's cabinet was that this really changed things."

Damian Whitworth's lunch of steak and fermented veg, as recommended by Sean O'Mara, below



Kennedy has spoken of losing 20lb in 20 days on the diet and said Vance was also on it. "I will disclose, I don't take care of the president," O'Mara says, a hint of regret in his voice. Converting Trump, who famously loves hamburgers and fries, to a steak-and-sauerkraut diet would be unlikely, I suggest. "I think he would do very good if he gave it a try. I'd love to talk to him about it."

Using MRI scans to identify fat in the abdomen and around the heart of his clients, O'Mara claims that the carnivore diet he recommends will help to reduce this fat and enable weight loss. "The number one complaint I get is people tell me, 'I've lost too much weight,'" he says.

O'Mara advocates eating the meat of grass-fed ruminants (cattle, bison, sheep, deer, elk, moose), which he says are the healthiest proteins because the animals ferment food in their stomachs and have "a higher amount of nutrition stored in their flesh". Wild, but not farmed, fish is also permissible. Ultra-processed food is not.

His clients eat side portions of fermented foods, such as sauerkraut and kimchi. Fermented foods are recommended by dieticians because studies suggest they improve digestive health, increase gut microbiome diversity, reduce inflammation and may lower the risk of type 2 diabetes. Where O'Mara's "living diet" goes in a radically different direction is in ditching all fresh vegetables and fruit — and indeed all other plants, including grains.

I head to Wholefoods and stock up on sauerkraut (plain; with carrot; with fennel, apple and dill) and kimchi. By the time I have stacked the fridge with jars and a pile of steaks and other meat there isn't room for much else.

The next morning I forgo my beloved overnight oats, packed with fruit, nuts and seeds, for a bowl of kefir yoghurt with a blackcurrant compote, the only fermented fruit I could find.

O'Mara takes the view that fruit should be fermented to reduce the fructose, but Dr Federica Amati, nutrition lead at Imperial College London's School of Medicine and the head nutritionist at Zoe, tells me he's wrong to worry about this natural sugar. "When you eat fruit you're not just getting the fructose, you're eating fibre and polyphenols and vitamins and minerals."

After my Pilates class I am ravenous. By lunchtime, when I have cooked a 350g steak and put on a red tie to have my photograph taken, I am a little hangry. If this was the Oval Office and Volodymyr Zelensky wandered in, I might easily disgrace myself.

I eat the steak with the fermented veg, mixing both in each mouthful as instructed by O'Mara. The pungent cabbage is tolerable, if tedious to munch. A fizzy kimchi made in Hackney, east London, is revolting.

By late afternoon I'm distinctly peckish again and wondering if the reason the Maga brigade are losing weight on this diet is simply because they are not getting enough to eat. I open the bread bin and look at the lovely, crusty loaf, but restrain myself.

At 5pm I cook an early, pre-theatre dinner of two wild salmon steaks from the northeast Pacific. I devour them both, when normally I would have one, and force down a load more sauerkraut and then some more kefir yoghurt and fruit compote.

After the theatre I stare morosely into the fridge at all the jars of cabbage I'm not interested in and all the other things I can't eat. I make do with a chunk of Roquefort (O'Mara approves of "old world" fermented cheeses) and more kefir and fruit and go to bed not entirely sated.

On Sunday I wake up hungry and feeling slightly off. I eat my kefir yoghurt and fruit compote while watching every bite my wife takes of her sourdough toast. I am craving carbs. I eat three scrambled eggs with a bit of leftover steak and some pâté made from mackerel and yoghurt, washed down with a kombucha ginger fermented tea.

We meet friends at a French restaurant for lunch. I scan the menu urgently as everyone else tucks into the warm baguette. More mackerel to start and another steak for my main course. The rest of our party eat my frites and salad. Following O'Mara and Kennedy's example, I have brought my own sauerkraut in a tupperware box and discreetly spoon it onto my plate.

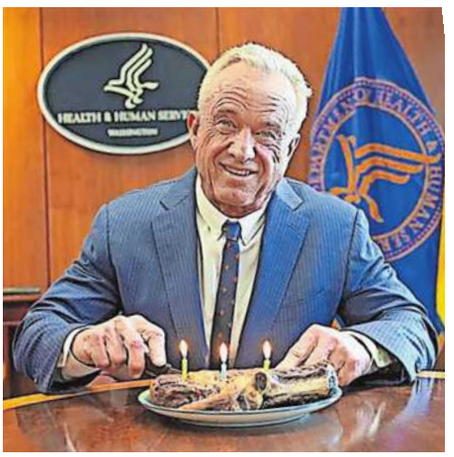
> **"When I defecate it's like an orgasm... There is no smell**

To wash it all down: a glass of claret. Well, it's fermented isn't it? When I check in with O'Mara to see if that's allowed he emails back: "CUT out alcohol Damian. Try to eliminate it as you do this experiment for humanity."

After talking to O'Mara, all those crazy clips of Kennedy doing press-ups in jeans make a bit more sense. O'Mara tells his clients not to bother with long gym sessions but instead do short weights workouts and bursts of press-ups and pull-ups to exhaustion. "I tell the cabinet members to do push-ups in the Situation Room in the White House. When you're stressed out, drop and do push-ups. The answer to stress for my executives is to do something intensely, physically stressful — very brief."

I raise a delicate question that has been troubling my family: will all that

COVER AND BELOW: JOHN ANGERSON FOR THE TIMES; @HHSGOV/X; AP



fermented cabbage turn me into a colossal windbag? "It goes completely away as you adopt this," O'Mara claims. "I never pass gas."

He volunteers that he and his clients have ideal stools. "You don't need toilet paper. When I defecate it's like an orgasm. It's three seconds long. It feels amazing. I can have a bowel movement behind a sheet at a dinner party in the corner of the room. There's no noise, no smell."

Does he actually do that?

"No I don't. But I could."

Amati says that his claim that he does not need toilet paper is "framing this symptom of fibre deprivation as a marker for health, which is wild".

O'Mara claims that the best way to consume fibre is from fermented foods but Amati says three to four tablespoons of sauerkraut provides one gram of fibre, and I need 30g a day. She is not overly concerned about the relatively high levels of salt in it because it seems to lower blood pressure. But if you were to eat the quantity required to get the daily recommended fibre, the amount of sodium would be high and it would be too much of a good thing.

O'Mara, who says he is based in New York, Washington DC and Los Angeles, is today in Minneapolis, where he pulls up images on a screen behind him, including a bottle of Mountain Dew, the soft drink. On his diet, he says, my urine should become that electric yellow. "When you start peeing like that, you're going to feel amazing. I pee like a racehorse. I'm rather proud of how loud and forcefully my urine stream comes out."

He laments the modern use of soap, which he says strips beneficial microbes from our skin. "I do not use soap. I just use water. I'm very clean-looking. I don't smell. I have an attractive odour to me."

Carnivore diets like this have a reputation for being macho. O'Mara says about 30 per cent of his clients are women. "Many men seem attracted through social media to carnivore-based diets, but its application and dietary strategies seem to work the same for females."

Amati says O'Mara's diet is right to stress the importance of eating whole foods and fermented foods. "But it is restrictive and ignores some of the most important food groups for health: whole grains, nuts and seeds, fresh fruits and legumes. We also know that a high red meat diet is not a healthy dietary pattern when considering metabolic and cancer outcomes."

We've been told for years that a diet high in red meat increases risk of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and colorectal cancers. O'Mara argues that because studies show associations rather than causal links, this hasn't been proved. Amati points out that it would be unethical to feed people a red meat diet as part of a randomised control trial, but that there is enough data to show the risks. She believes that Kennedy's promotion of the diet, as health secretary, is dangerous.

"It's not just that he's risking his own health, it's all the millions of people who will adopt it. And they won't have the MRI monitoring, the concierge physician, and screening for pre-existing conditions."

After a huge plate of lamb koftas for dinner, I have eaten more red meat in two days than I would usually eat in three weeks and what feels like more kimchi than anyone needs in a lifetime. I will spare you the details of my bowel movements, but after two days of meat and not much fibre let's just say I am experiencing the opposite of the ecstatic movement O'Mara claims to enjoy. He says that by mixing meats and a wide variety of fermented things "every meal is exciting". Not for me. I want some green veg. Potatoes. A banana. If that means I can't be a leader of men, so be it. Right now I am going to have a delicious slice of sourdough toast.

Can an Eighties self-help guide help me get over my Gen Z ex?

I thought my relationship was perfect — then it ended. I turned to the past for answers. By Hannah Van De Peer

I would hate to sound clichéd but not so long ago I was in the type of relationship I'd always dreamt of. I'd spent the first half of my twenties dating men who didn't want to commit to me, but in 2023 I'd finally found a guy who was all-in. In my eyes everything was perfect... Until one morning it was all over, out of the blue.

He was kind, attentive and genuinely seemed to care for me. We'd been together for nearly three years, moved into a two-bedroom flat in Bristol after one year and practically lived in each other's pockets.

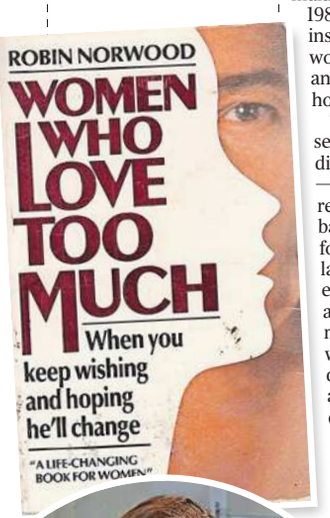
I was obliviously in my little bubble of contentment. The month before he left me, we'd spent a week snowmobiling in the Arctic Circle — hunting the northern lights and sleeping in a tiny house in Rovaniemi, Finland. Then one morning in March it was over before I'd even properly opened my eyes.

I was devastated. For the first month I was running on adrenaline, willpower and espresso (martinis). My focus became securing myself another flat and getting my finances in order while navigating a ridiculously awkward atmosphere in our current home until he moved out a few weeks later.

I've always worn my heart on my sleeve but for a while I felt as if I were dragging it along behind me. I'm about to sound like a Gen Z stereotype but in my desperation I turned to TikTok for advice on how to get over it. I was bombarded with beautiful women going on backpacking holidays to Australia, holding solo engagement parties and somehow spending every single night having drinks with friends. None of this was applicable to me — I'm a broke freelance journalist with a big fear of spiders.

Although an official intervention never took place, my friends gently encouraged me to spend less time wallowing in my own sadness and more time sinking spicy margaritas and getting laid. This is how I spent the second month of my break-up. It was a welcome cover-all but it didn't exactly solve my core problem: what could I have done better before he resorted to dumping me?

The question lingered with me right up until I visited my parents in Cambridge last month. I'm not sure if divine intervention came into play but during this trip I managed to find the answers I was looking for. Strolling down Mill Road, a bustling neighbourhood just outside the city centre, something compelled me to visit a local Amnesty bookshop. As I regularly do when shopping for books, I went to the self-help and love/sex sections, wondering if any of the titles might speak to my predicament.



Hannah Van De Peer and the book she found in a charity shop

> **My friends advised me to stop wallowing, sink spicy margaritas and get laid**

One of the books I picked out grabbed me immediately: *Women Who Love Too Much*, written by the relationship therapist Robin Norwood. The title alone felt like a call-out from a blunt friend. This wasn't going to be a warm hug, loving ear and hot cup of tea, and it certainly wasn't going to coddle me out of my post-break-up malaise. Despite it being published in 1985, 13 years before I was born, I instantly identified with it: I *am* a woman who loves too much — and I desperately want to learn how to stop.

The book covers a number of sessions Norwood ran with different clients across her career — unpicking their issues with relationships and relating them back to the reader. We hear from, for instance, Jill, an uber-successful law school graduate who threw everything at her disposal to turn a one-night stand into something more serious, and Trudi, a woman who nearly "died for love" after deliberately driving her car off a cliff to get her ex's attention. It didn't work.

For my copy, an early 2000s reprint, the book cover looks more Trinny and Susannah than power suits and shoulder pads, but the content is about as retro as you can get. Women are, at times, woefully generalised. Norwood suggests a lot of women with romance troubles probably have turbulent relationships with their dads — which couldn't be further from the truth for me. I noticed it's all very hetero too: if you're a woman in a queer relationship, don't expect any tailored advice from Norwood here.

However, for a book predating my love life by 30 years, a lot of Norwood's advice was strangely relevant to my situation. She says women who love too much will often blame themselves when relationships break down, ignoring the fact that a lot of men will be open from the beginning about having commitment issues.

I felt personally called out when the author highlighted "good guys" being a turn-off for women who love too much — if they're already perfect, how are we going to internalise all their problems as our own?

I took her advice and began setting boundaries for myself. Crucially, I've stopped treating my ex's apparent issues with the relationship as my own. I was blissfully unaware there was anything wrong with the relationship. I'm not a mindreader, and I don't beat myself up for it any more.

At 28, I've moved to the Cotswolds and I spend a lot of time reconnecting with nature. I'm finding it easier to move on with the whole thing, and I didn't know my answers would come from a 1980s self-help guide. I think I'm ready to re-enter the dating pool.

life

Ask Professor Tanya Byron

My friend is dying. Her husband won't talk about it

Q **My closest friend is dying of cancer. She is only 46 and has two children, aged 12 and 14. She is in a hospice and, although she is physically very weak, her mind is as sharp and brilliant as always. She accepts that she is dying and wants to spend the time she has left being a mother. She wants to write birthday letters, record messages, make memory boxes, choose music for her funeral and, most importantly, have honest conversations with her children so she can reassure them that, although she won't survive this, they will.**

The problem is her husband. He refuses to engage with any conversation about her death. If she mentions her funeral, he changes the subject. If she talks about memory boxes, he says there will be time later. He has always been a hands-on, kind and loving father but now he has shut down. He won't discuss plans for the children and only visits the hospice briefly. The children come too, but far less often than they want because he says it's too upsetting.

My friend cries with me because she feels she's being denied the chance to finish being their mother. We've secretly written letters, recorded videos and gathered photographs because she's terrified she'll run out of time.

I know grief affects everyone differently but I am becoming increasingly angry with her husband. His refusal to face reality feels as though he's robbing his family of moments they can never get back. The children are confused because nobody is telling them the truth, even though they know what is happening. I want to confront him. There isn't much time left. How do I support her while putting aside my own fury?
Thérèse

A Your friend has asked you to help her to actively mother her children until her death. What an extraordinary privilege, a testament to you and your friendship, but one that also places you in a complicated and painful position.

I understand your anger. Watching someone you love prepare for death while feeling prevented from enabling her to do so as she chooses is heartbreaking. Your friend's husband's behaviour could be seen as indifference or cruelty but I wonder if it represents a profound inability to tolerate the reality that his wife is dying — a psychological state called protective avoidance.

As we all know, when reality feels unbearable, we instinctively avoid anything that makes it more real. Your friend seems to be able to turn towards what is happening while her husband seems caught in turning away. Neither response is unusual or chosen consciously but instead reflect different ways of surviving the unimaginable. The problem is that when avoidance becomes the only coping strategy, it may prevent families having the conversations and creating the memories that later become a source of comfort.

Avoidance often reduces distress in the short term but increases long-term suffering. Research shows that children facing the death of a parent cope better when they're given honest, age-appropriate information and the opportunity to ask questions than when they are protected by avoidance or vague reassurance. When adults avoid the truth, children rarely become less anxious.

Your friend is trying to live what remains of her life, especially as a mother. Parents don't stop parenting because they are dying. Many begin parenting in a different way: passing on stories, advice, family history and love that will outlive them. Those conversations, letters and memory boxes are not morbid but acts of continuing attachment, allowing a relationship to endure beyond death.

If you would like Professor Tanya Byron's help, email proftanyabyron@thetimes.co.uk

Your friend's husband is losing his wife while simultaneously facing the prospect of becoming a single parent, and compassion may achieve more than confrontation. Your instincts are understandable but before confronting her husband consider whether this will help your friend. If the answer is no, your anger may become another obstacle she has to manage.

Instead, if your friend wants you to, try approaching him with compassion. What does he fear will happen if the children spend more time with their mother? What is he protecting them from? He may believe he's shielding them from pain when he may be protecting himself from an unbearable reality. It may also be worth encouraging him or your friend to ask the children, with the support of the hospice team if appropriate, what they want. Many children desperately want more time with a dying parent but stay silent because they sense the surviving parent cannot bear it.

Keep returning to your friend's wishes. If she wants to write letters, help her to write them. If she wants recordings, help her to make them. If she wants the children to know something, help her to tell them.

There's one more person your friend may also be able to keep caring for: her husband. Although she can't spare him the grief of losing her, she may be able to prepare him for life after. Just as she wants to leave her children letters and memories, she may also leave him guidance and reassurance.

Many people approaching the end of life find comfort in knowing they are still able to protect, guide and nurture those they love. Rather than feeling helpless, they regain a sense of purpose. Your friend could write about the routines the children find comforting, the values she hopes they will grow up with, family traditions she wants to continue. She could help him to see that he doesn't have to be perfect and also reassure him that he is "a hands-on, kind and loving father", and that she leaves the children with confidence in his ability to raise them. He may be scared that he could never replace her and she could help him to understand that he doesn't have to.

Hospices have psychologists, family support workers and child bereavement specialists whose role is to facilitate these conversations. They may also be able to support your friend's husband in understanding what children facing the death of a parent are likely to need. A conversation with a hospice psychologist or family support worker may carry a different weight and be easier for him to hear. They can support him in seeing that protective avoidance is a common coping strategy, but that children's psychological adjustment is better when they are included in conversations and given opportunities to create lasting memories.

Finally, don't forget yourself. You are living through anticipatory grief too. You're supporting your friend, protecting her wishes and witnessing suffering. No wonder your emotions feel close to the surface. You don't have to suppress your anger, you need to express it. Talk to the hospice staff, a trusted friend or a counsellor. The calmer you can remain, the more useful you'll be to your friend in the precious time she has left.

The legacy your friend leaves her children will not only be the letters, recordings and memory boxes you are creating together. It will be the knowledge that, until the very end, they'll always know that she never stopped being their mother. By helping her to honour that role in the time she has left, you're helping her to leave her children with a lifetime of love. Few gifts could matter more.

Free books of the month

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When I was born my father was 62. I kept his age a secret

He ate at the Ritz, smoked 60 a day and heard Édith Piaf sing. Growing up I told no one about my dad. By Katie Glass

JOONEY WOODWARD

Katie Glass. Above: her father in October 1959

For most of my life I've been deeply ashamed of the age of my father. He was 62 when I came into the world. My mother was 24. I was still a teenager when he turned 80 (he was born in 1919).

Until recently I had regarded old fathers with disgust. News of Mick Jagger having a child at 73, Robert De Niro at 79, Al Pacino at 83 and Bernie Ecclestone at 89 appalled me. In the same way I take an instant dislike to men in their sixties whose dating profiles say they are "open to having children", and I high-mindedly note that, despite the endless griping about older mothers, significant evidence shows that fathers over 40 land their offspring with higher rates of debilitating conditions including autism, schizophrenia and leukaemia.

My mother was so ashamed of their 40-year age gap, she wouldn't let any of my friends meet him. This wasn't helped by rows in which I'd cruelly call her a gerontophile. (I know, teenagers are awful.) I continued to keep him a secret into my adulthood, which is now an endless source of regret because when he died none of my friends knew him, so I had no one to share my memories of him with. That feels sad because he was wonderful. And fascinating.

He was the same generation as most of my friends' grandparents, born more than 100 years ago. Our relationship brought me within touching distance of a history that otherwise I would not have known.

My grandparents fled Lithuania during the 1890s pogroms, and my father, who was an Orthodox Jew, lived through the 1920s and 1930s, thankfully in Scotland.

Something of a Zelig figure, he claimed to have heard Édith Piaf sing. At 17, in 1936, he went to South Africa to see the British Empire Exhibition held in Johannesburg — and emigrated there. Later, as a salesman in 1950s America, he claimed to have been taught by Dale Carnegie, the author of *How to Win Friends and Influence People*.

I can't remember a time when my father didn't look old. He was old before I was born and his tastes were old-fashioned. His favourite songs were Frank Sinatra's *My Way* and Shirley Bassey's rendition of *Send in the Clowns*. He had the tastes and manner of a man of his time. He'd drive me around in a Bentley and take me for dinner at the Ritz Club, giving me the ladies' menu, which had no prices on. Because he lived in London, in Soho, he managed to share his life as it had been, unchanged for decades. We'd go for coffee at Bar Italia and lunch at the Brass Rail in Selfridges, which served the same succulent salt beef he had been eating for the past 40 years — although he would complain about the prices. We would see live music at Ronnie Scott's and wander around the British Library.

Katie's father, who was born in 1919

Although his tastes were outdated, he never seemed stuffy because he was such fun. Always childishly inquisitive, he was quick-minded and fascinated by new things. Extremely interested in technology, he started using the internet before me and would use it to discover places for us to visit.

In other ways his attitudes were shaped by his time. He was resilient and cold, of a generation of men who shared little that was personal, and never his feelings. I once asked about his experience of being a Jewish man who had lived through the war and he vaguely answered that he had been "busy flying". He had a private pilot's licence. We never spoke about it again.

He didn't talk about how his mother had died when he was three or how, at ten, he had become head of the household because his father emigrated to South Africa.

He certainly didn't think of mollycoddling me. When I left home at 16 it never occurred to him to suggest I move in with him. (My parents divorced when I was two and I lived with my mother afterwards.) He wasn't cruel, we simply never discussed how we felt. So, when I'd call him, he'd ask: "Is there anything you need?" Out of pride I'd say no. And our conversation would end.

He was sexist in a way that felt jarring even for a man of his generation, once telling me, "I saw your mother the way you see a pair of earrings," revealing how little he knew about either of us. It was an immense source of pride to me later in his life when he told me I had changed his mind about women working.

> **My mother was so ashamed of their 40-year age gap, she wouldn't let any of my friends meet him**

Very much a man of his time, he was totally emotionally unavailable and a workaholic. When I turned up to see him on rare custody visits, travelling from our home in rural Wales to his flat in London, he would look up from a phone call and say: "Here's £50, why don't you go and buy yourself a dress."

Christmas and birthdays meant nothing to him, he would work through them. When I established a routine of taking him for lunch on his birthday, he only agreed to it to humour me.

I've always hoped that having a dad who lived until such a good age would make me fairly invincible too — he did care for his health. He never followed any wild longevity protocols or gluten-free diets or had stem cell therapy. But he walked everywhere, ate sensibly, watched his weight and went on his exercise bike religiously for half an hour every day. I think city living did him good, shuffling around Soho keeping his mind busy.

Death was ever present. From my early childhood the looming fear of losing him always hung over me. I lived waiting for a phone call to tell me he'd gone. When it happened it was still shocking.

In the end it was Alzheimer's. He died at 90, when I was 28. His decline happened so quickly that the council had moved him from his flat to a care home in Eastbourne and had destroyed his possessions before I could see him. That, and the fact that I am estranged from my mother, means I have no pictures of us together. But it was some comfort that I'd seen him just the week before he died and told him I was a journalist. He'd smiled, although he didn't know who I was.

Incredibly, given the grand age of my father, I had until recently been spared "daddy issues". My boyfriends have mostly been younger. Now, though, I have fallen for an older man who reminds me a lot of my father in ways that delight and concern me.

These days, having an older father is becoming more common. Last year the Office for National Statistics observed a notable rise in dads over 60 — an increase of 14.2 per cent in 2024 compared with the previous year.

My shame about my father's age evaporated after he died and other people I loved died. I realised that connection matters far more than other people's opinions.

After his death I went searching for more pieces of my father — and I suppose of myself. So, an addendum to this story is that recently, in my early forties, I met my dad's daughter from his first marriage for the first time: my sister, who is 75.

first night

proms

Marvin Gaye: Prince of Soul

Royal Albert Hall, London

★★★★☆

Just before this sold-out Royal Albert Hall Prom began, the government's extreme heat warning pinged on audience phones. Two hours later, the New Orleans-born singer Luke James was clearly in flagrant breach as he delivered an incendiary smooch through *Sexual Healing*, flirting and twerking before a swoonsome, mostly female crowd ("oh baby, I'm just like an oven, I need some lovin'"). And that was after *Let's Get It On* had sent fans, and their owners, a-fluttering.

Of course, as well as being a bedroom balladeer, Gaye anticipated environmental burn-out with *Mercy Mercy Me (the Ecology)*, a word hitherto unheard in a Tamla Motown song title. The evening was a fine celebration of every side of Gaye which was also peppered with his Sixties smashes from the Motown hit factory: *I Heard it Through the Grapevine*, *Can I Get a Witness*, *Sunny* and all.

A tag-team of five lead vocalists plus nine glamorous backing singers and the ample forces of the BBC Concert Orchestra conducted by Edwin Outwater deployed maximum firepower, only rarely overwhelming the all-important groove. Gaye's duet hits were handled by Wayne Hernandez with Vula Malinga (*It Takes Two*) or Cherise (*Ain't Nothing Like the Real Thing*).

There was time too for a couple of tunes from *Here, My Dear*, Gaye's commercially disastrous but now well-regarded 1978 break-up album. It fell to the London-based singer BAELY to make sense of *A Funky Space Reincarnation* ("Hey little baby, let's magnetise"). Still, this rambling disco workout left room for a potent trumpet solo.

After all the colour and drama came a poignant sign-off: the orchestra accompanied a recording of Gaye's velvet tones singing *Distant Lover*. Gaye died 42 years ago, shot dead by his father after an argument. This magnificently staged concert underlined what a loss his passing was to the world of R&B — and music in general.

John Bungey

Available now on BBC Sounds and on BBC iPlayer from Aug 22

JESS SHURTE

Marieke Heebink and Hans Kesting (as Roy Cohn) in the Edinburgh International Festival production

Words, words, words

Ivo van Hove's staging of Tony Kushner's Aids epic is stripped back but still too long, says Clive Davis

theatre

Angels in America

King's Theatre, Edinburgh (295min)

★★★☆☆

In Woody Allen's films, just about everyone has a therapist. The characters in Tony Kushner's overwrought, two-part Aids epic *Angels in America* might as well all have their own personal speechwriter. The torrent of words never stops.

Which means that, even though Ivo van Hove's version at the newly refurbished King's Theatre is pared down — the Belgian director compresses *Millennium Approaches* and *Perestroika* into an evening which lasts just under five hours — you still come away feeling pummelled. Kushner has declared Van Hove's staging (first presented by Internationaal Theater Amsterdam more than a decade ago) as his favourite of all the productions mounted in the past three decades.

Fans of the American playwright will, of course, be eager to see it again. But this bare-bones treatment — the performing space is empty aside from a record turntable and speakers, while grainy videos flicker away on screens at the rear — means that we are even more at the mercy of Kushner's tendency to deliver discourses rather than conversation. And since the piece is performed in Dutch, your eyes are constantly straying towards the surtitles.

Except, that is, when Hans Kesting's impersonation of that real-life New York lawyer and power broker Roy Cohn is at the centre of things. You can't help wishing that Kushner could have focused all his attention on this closet homosexual (who was, incidentally, mentor to the young Donald Trump). The cold-blooded fixer we see here is a bully, a racist and a profound hypocrite, yet when he is reduced to just another shrivelled victim of Aids, dragging a hospital drip behind him, Kesting comes as close as anyone could imagine to making Cohn a figure worthy of pity.

Most of the other characters are mouthpieces in a morality tale which grows more fantastical in the *Peer Gynt*-like second half. Krisjan Schellingerhout brings conviction to the role of the married Republican Joe Pitt, torn between his Mormon roots and his repressed sexual urges. Jesse Mensah brings quiet dignity to the role of the impossibly noble gay black nurse Belize, who cares for Cohn as his body falls apart.

It's three years since Van Hove put us and a heroic James Norton through prolonged scenes of self-harming in the grandiose melodrama *A Little Life*. In that West End marathon, the bouts of self-loathing were underscored by a live string quartet. Here you get blasts of David Bowie as the fever dream lurches onwards.

To Thu

proms

Berlioz's Requiem

Royal Albert Hall, London

★★★★☆

It wasn't just about the decibels. Not quite — though with ten timpanists hammering 20 kettledrums, eight cymbal players, four brass bands, the supercharged strings and winds of the London Symphony Orchestra and the massed lung power of 200 singers from the London Symphony Chorus and BBC Symphony Chorus arrayed up to the Royal Albert Hall's rafters, there were plenty of moments when the sound hit you like a typhoon.

No, the real revelation of hearing Hector Berlioz's Requiem — not surprisingly, it doesn't come round often — was being reminded of how weirdly wonderful it is. The maverick Frenchman wrote it in 1837, ostensibly to commemorate fallen soldiers, but more truthfully to promote himself and his idiosyncratic approach to almost everything. That extended not just to the famous (or notorious) strokes of orchestration: the trombones' pedal notes blaring like a ship's hooter under a trio of delicate flutes; or the skim of 16 cymbals suggesting the shimmering light of paradise as the tenor (superb Julien Henric) floated the gentle Sanctus.

It could also be heard in the Requiem's choral writing which, for all its blazing sonority when pitted against those 40-odd brass players, often harks back to the austere polyphony of Renaissance music. And just as memorable as the big outbursts were those passages where Berlioz reduces the music to a wisp from a single instrument or a sparse two-part counterpoint.

Not everything was perfect in this performance. The combined choruses followed Antonio Pappano's beat impeccably and produced magnificently beefy tone, but the tenors tired towards the end and their intonation slightly wavered. And in the Agnus Dei the LSO woodwinds suddenly developed an inability to start chords together.

Overall, however, Pappano shaped the work persuasively. At the premiere the impulsive Berlioz famously leapt onto the podium and angrily pushed the conductor aside because he felt the performance was falling apart. I imagine he would have been very content to stay standing with the Prommers here.

Richard Morrison

Available on BBC Sounds

comedy

Julian Clary: Fully Dilated

Assembly Rooms, Edinburgh (60min)

★★★★☆

It's been a big year for comedians doing retrospectives on their life and career. So don't be misled by Julian Clary's typically suggestive title for this ten-day Edinburgh Fringe stopoff at the Assembly Rooms: *Fully Dilated* tucks in neatly alongside recent shows by his contemporaries Ruby Wax, Lenny Henry and Harry Enfield.

Or as neatly as Clary, 67, will allow in this teatime slot: "You're probably thinking it's too early for buggery and oral... but you'd be wrong."

This could be a full touring show if he expanded and finessed it to full completion (blimey, an hour in Clary's company and everything turns to filth). Before that he has his annual run at the London Palladium pantomime, this time alongside French and Saunders.

Julian Clary: getting personal

What's here for now is engaging, amusing, only slightly rough around the edges as Clary both does the act and drops the act. For a while he pads the stage, amiably belittling the Assembly Rooms front rows: "You're 65 and you wear a hoodie? You don't care, do you?" He sings a song called *Life's a C****, written for him by Gary Wilmot.

After a while he gets more personal. Much though Clary mocks the kind of boo-hoo show where comics talk turkey about traumas, he traces through the first half of his career, from the Edinburgh Fringe in 1978 to finding his beloved Fanny the Wonder Dog, who accompanied him on stage for his early years performing as the Joan Collins Fan Club.

He takes us through his love life, including a period of committed promiscuity in the early Eighties. He considers himself lucky to have survived it, as Aids took grip, and saw his boyfriend Chris die in 1991, just as Clary was starting to become a household name.

Amid the openness the jokes keep coming, but Clary turns rueful too without turning sentimental, talking about accepting ageing. "What's the alternative, looking like Simon Cowell?"

The concluding speak-sing rendition of a reworded *My Way* caps thing nicely: slightly facetious, but with a deft touch of emotional acuity behind all that camp command.

Dominic Maxwell

To Aug 23

ROGER MASTROIANNI

Why I've spent 20 years pretending to be Woody Guthrie

David Lutken believes the folk legend still has much to teach us about America. He talks to Libby Purves

David M Lutken is more than pleased to land in the UK and reprise his heartfelt play about the folk singer Woody Guthrie.

Enthused by the country early on a summer choir trip, "I decided to go to drama school in London and studied at the Royal College of Music with Lyndon Van der Pump [a noted Welsh RCM vocal teacher]," he says. He was already steeped in church and folk tradition. "I grew up in Dallas, youngest of four. We all sang in the choir. I played mandolin from age three or four. When my brother turned seven and graduated from it, he just handed me the instrument. Many of my teachers were socialists and they all considered Woody Guthrie a Texan. As I do!" Guthrie in fact moved there at 17, from Oklahoma.

A new British generation may be less familiar with Guthrie than us Sixties hippy-inclined teenagers, but lately a new awareness has grown of that "ornery", rebellious, left-leaning spirit from the past century. In the opening moments of the film *A Complete Unknown*, Timothée Chalamet, as the young Bob Dylan, hikes in fresh from Minnesota, and as a kind of pilgrimage visits Woody Guthrie in Brooklyn State Hospital. The older man is in the late stages of Huntington's disease, nonverbal and dependent, with Pete Seeger at his bedside with a guitar. That snapshot of a real day in 1961 is a symbol of something deeply woven into American culture: a particular thread of music, simple song, down-home determination and fierce communitarian beliefs.

At a moment when it is easy to define America by Trump, Hegseth and tech-bro billionaires, it feels good to be reminded of that thread: to think of Guthrie strumming and busking through the Depression and the Midwest Dust Bowl years, serving in the Second World War merchant marine, surviving the McCarthy blacklist. He never joined the Communist Party, saying, "I ain't a communist necessarily, but been in the red all my life." His most familiar song, *This Land Is Your Land*, was written in 1940 because he found Irving Berlin's *God Bless America* too preachy.

In the UK the fame of Dylan, Seeger and Joan Baez obscures Guthrie's memory a little, so it was refreshing 15 years ago to see, in a small London theatre, Lutken's heartfelt four-hander jukebox musical about his hero. This month it returns to the Edinburgh Fringe, then in September to London.

In *Woody Sez*, which premiered in 2007, the dry, thoughtful narrator tells of the songwriter's life, starting with a childhood singing *The Gypsy Davy* alongside his mother (who also developed Huntington's and ended up in an asylum), his young sister's death, and his 1930s travel to California among desperate crowds of migrant workers, on the road or selling their souls to the company store.

With Lutken are three musicians with an assortment of instruments from mandolin and zither to jawharp and spoons, driving the story along with buskers' tricks, unglamorously at ease. A couple of times each run Lutken declares a hootenanny afterwards, so anyone with a voice or instrument can jam along.

It's open-heartedly straightforward, on the Guthrie principle that "any fool can make something complicated, takes genius to make it simple". I remember walking afterwards past London street-sleepers with *Ain't Got No Home in This World Anymore* ringing in my head. This time Lutken says he's adding *Deportee* — one of Guthrie's last songs, an elegy for the 1948 air crash at Los Gatos, California, in which migrant agricultural workers died. That, he needs hardly point out, makes a sharp point in the days of ICE. The lines echo: "Six hundred miles to the Mexican border/ They chased us like rustlers, like outlaws, like thieves".

His research is deep. Thirty years ago he met Harold Leventhal, Guthrie's old manager: "He gave me material from his own archives and the newspaper column 'Woody Sez' he wrote for two years." Lutken admits it's "difficult to telescope the story. But I hope what people will go away with is the message: endurance, courage, goodwill, community."

As to Lutken's own politics, "I did grow up in the Episcopal church — that does have a bit of politics to it, all churches do. But until the middle of the 1960s it was just my older siblings talking about it. Texas in those days was pretty firmly a Democrat state: like Will Rogers said, 'I'm not a member of any organised political party, I'm a democrat.' That's how the rural US felt, then. When I got to college, I went to demos and marched, yeah. And we were the family band for Earth Day in 1972.

"Now? Well, the other day I was with my family in New Orleans for the No Kings protest [thousands held these rallies in spring, branding Trump a tyrant]," Lutken says. "So I'm frustrated, yes, I do get angry. I've played and sung through Bush, Clinton, Obama, Trump, Biden. Now Trump's back. What's going on in the US now is very difficult. But I certainly hope for the best. Perhaps I'm not as ornery as Guthrie."

We talk a little about the skewed perceptions the US and UK have of one another now. "I hope my contribution is to be a kind of ambassador. A missive to the rest of the world about what has come of 250 years of the US, and what we represent. Knock on the door, show the good stuff. Because it's still there, all that Guthrie felt: a will that people should be open, more determined to depend on each other, that nobody should go to bed hungry at night and see that nobody else does either."

He took *Woody Sez* to China. "A lot of the students were learning English at Shanghai University, young kids. A couple with good English came to see me, read the script together, then they'd explain in Chinese as we went along. Most of the songs have repeated lines, which helped. We talked about the US and about the Second World War, which of course they define very differently. We did have hootenannies: they brought guitars but also traditional Chinese instruments."

> "I've sung through Bush, Clinton, Obama, Biden and Trump, twice

On another trip, to the Middle East, the show acquired different resonances. "Once we played in Israel, then on the West Bank: Hebron, Jenin, Ramallah. We did hootenannies with Israelis and with Palestinian folk bands. Songs about land meant a lot there."

I bet they did. But in a fiery world this gentle soul is optimistic. "I guess I'm a forwardist," Lutken says. "You got to put one foot in front of the other while things change. Keep on keepin' on, as Woody says. I find it kind of amazing to think how later in life he still looked that way."

As to his own politics and fortunes, how is life in showbiz at a time when Trump has abruptly, preposterously taken over the Kennedy Center himself?

"Well... there's a bit of a whiplash in the theatre world. Information travels fast, and a lot of productions have been met with resistance, from audiences or boards of directors. The powers choosing what's done in theatres veer this way and that. Either hard towards the right, or defying it." A pause, with soft irony. "Those who are defiant are not the ones who have the most money."

After London Lutken is off to Washington. "I asked to do *This Land Is Your Land* on the White House lawn, was told I might fall right into the hole that's being dug there right now. But we're certainly going to Dupont Underground, an old trolley station up the street. Keep on keepin' on!"

Or as Guthrie also said: "A human being is... just a hoping machine".

***Woody Sez* is at Underbelly Bristo Square Cowbarn, Edinburgh, to Aug 30, then at Underbelly Boulevard, London, Sep 8-19**

Top: David Lutken in Woody Sez

Woody Guthrie in 1940

times2

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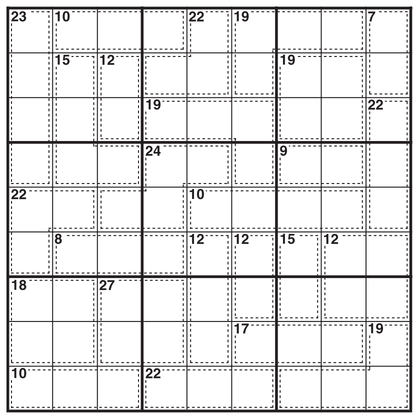
	1	2		9			6					9	3					6	7	
7		5	3									5					9	2		
		9	1						7	9						4		3	9	5
					5		7				3				3		2			
						7	4		9	8										
								9				8								
										7	6		3	2						
			3		4				3				8		7					
6	7	3		9						2	7						8	7		
		2	6					5									5	4		1
	2	8					9	3					4			5		1	3	
				7								8	1			4			7	5
7	6					8	5						6	7		8			4	
	1				3	2						4		1	5			8		
8				2		5	6	9						9	8				1	
2			8		6												4			6

Sudoku super fiendish

							1	
8				7				5
				9	3	8	2	
					7		9	2
	1	2				6	8	
7	3		6					
	8	3	7	6				
6				1				8
	4							

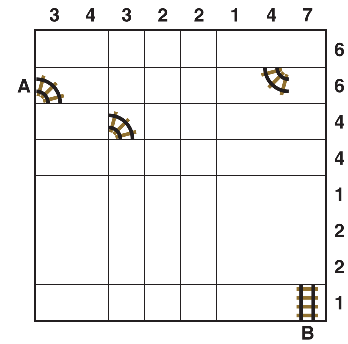
Killer deadly

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Each set of cells joined by dotted lines must add up to the target number in its top-left corner. Within each set of cells joined by dotted lines, a digit cannot be repeated.



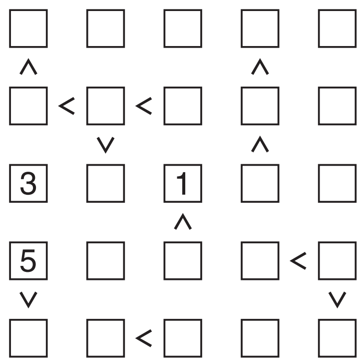
Train Tracks

Lay tracks to enable the train to travel from village A to village B. The numbers indicate how many sections of track go in each row and column. There are only straight sections and curved sections. The track cannot cross itself.

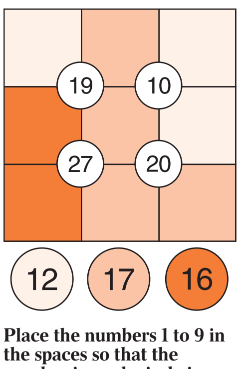


Futoshiki

Fill the blank squares so that every row and column contains each of the numbers 1 to 5 once only. The symbols between the squares indicate whether a number is larger (>) or smaller (<) than the number next to it.



Sakuro

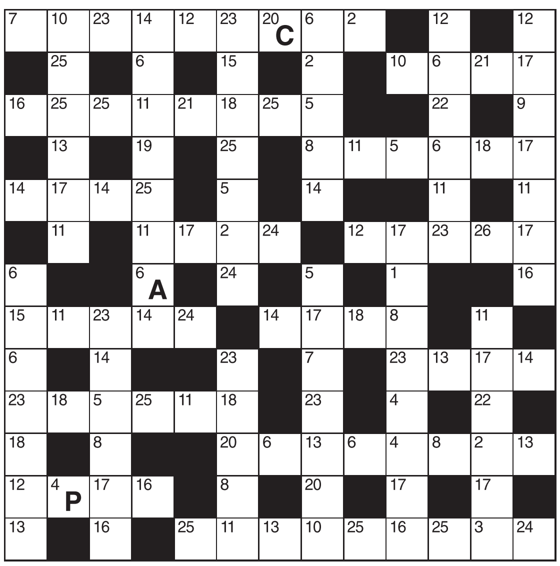


Place the numbers 1 to 9 in the spaces so that the number in each circle is equal to the sum of the four surrounding spaces, and each colour total is correct

Play Mini Sudoku every day Monday-Sunday online at thetimes.com and on Live app

Codeword

Every letter in the crossword-style grid, right, is represented by a number from 1 to 26. Each letter of the alphabet appears in the grid at least once. Use the letters already provided to work out the identity of further letters. Enter letters in the main grid and the smaller reference grid until all 26 letters of the alphabet have been accounted for. Proper nouns are excluded.



~~A~~ B ~~C~~ D E F G H I J K L M N O ~~P~~ Q R S T U V W X Y Z

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
			P		A							
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
						C						

Mini Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x2 box contains the digits 1 to 6

	4			2	
5					6
		5	2		
		1	5		
6					4
	1			5	

Solutions in tomorrow's Times2

Thursday's solutions

SAMURAI

5	7	6	9	1	8	4	3	2				4	6	8	3	2	5	9	1	7
8	2	1	6	3	4	9	5	7				2	7	1	9	4	8	3	5	6
3	4	9	5	2	7	1	6	8				9	3	5	7	6	1	8	4	2
7	3	4	2	8	9	6	1	5				7	4	6	2	5	9	1	3	8
9	1	8	7	5	6	2	4	3				1	5	9	6	8	3	7	2	4
6	5	2	1	4	3	7	8	9				8	2	3	1	7	4	5	6	9
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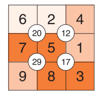
1	8	7	4	9	5	3	2	6	9	4	1	5	8	7	4	3	2	6	9	1
4	9	5	3	6	2	8	7	1	2	3	5	6	9	4	5	1	7	2	8	3
						9	4	8	5	6	7	1	2	3						
						1	6	2	8	9	3	7	4	5						
						7	3	5	4	1	2	9	6	8						
6	3	8	1	2	7	4	5	9	6	7	8	2	3	1	6	9	7	5	4	8
4	5	2	9	3	8	6	1	7	3	2	4	8	5	9	4	1	2	3	7	6
9	7	1	4	6	5	2	8	3	1	5	9	4	7	6	3	5	8	2	1	9
7	6	3	5	4	1	8	9	2				6	8	5	2	7	3	4	9	1
8	2	5	6	7	9	1	3	4				9	2	4	1	6	5	8	3	7
1	9	4	3	8	2	7	6	5				3	1	7	9	8	4	6	2	5
5	8	9	2	1	4	3	7	6				5	9	3	8	4	1	7	6	2
3	4	7	8	9	6	5	2	1				1	4	8	7	2	6	9	5	3
2	1	6	7	5	3	9	4	8				7	6	2	5	3	9	1	8	4

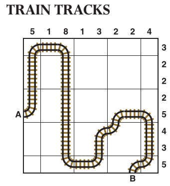
SAKURO



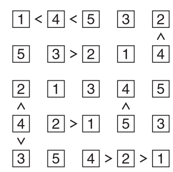
MINI SUDOKU

4	5	2	3	1	6
1	3	6	4	5	2
5	2	4	6	3	1
3	6	1	2	4	5
2	1	3	5	6	4
6	4	5	1	2	3

TRAIN TRACKS



FUTOSHIKI



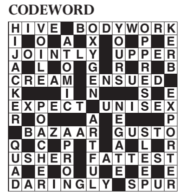
SUDOKU

8	5	4	7	9	1	3	6	2
7	9	2	3	5	6	1	4	8
6	3	1	4	2	8	9	5	7
4	7	5	2	6	3	8	1	9
2	6	8	9	1	5	4	7	3
9	1	3	8	7	4	6	2	5
1	4	9	5	8	2	7	3	6
3	2	7	6	4	9	5	8	1
5	8	6	1	3	7	2	9	4

KILLER

6	1	2	9	8	3	5	4	7
8	5	4	2	7	6	3	1	9
9	7	3	4	5	1	6	2	8
4	8	6	3	2	5	7	9	1
5	9	1	7	6	4	2	8	3
2	3	7	1	9	8	4	6	5
1	6	9	5	3	2	8	7	4
3	4	8	6	1	7	9	5	2
7	2	5	8	4	9	1	3	6

CODEWORD



This wannabe Breaking Bad is just too annoying

Carol Midgley TV review

Sunny Nights
ITVX
★★★☆☆

For much of the first 20 minutes I found *Sunny Nights* surprisingly grating. Will Forte is basically playing the same irritating milksop he played as Jack in Netflix's *The Four Seasons*, and though D'Arcy Carden (whom viewers of *The Good Place* will recognise) is something of a life force here, her character is also annoying.

But I have faith in Australian comedy (though this is more a dark dramedy) to deliver something different. Besides, the cold-open first scene in which a huge crocodile ambled out of the Sydney drainage system in an industrial landscape then on to a golf course where it promptly exploded, guts flying, was so surreal it was irresistible. You can't not watch on after a curtain-raiser like that.

And a third of the way in it did shake itself out of the mediocrity that had followed and take on a different flavour altogether, by the end explaining Mr Croc's walk-on role. Forte and Carden play Martin and Vicki, a weirdly close brother and sister who keep being mistaken for a couple and have moved from America to Sydney to try to launch a spray self-tan product called Tansform.

Martin, a strait-laced former financial risk analyser, is mooning wimpishly over his estranged wife, Joyce (Ra Chapman). She has moved to Australia and he is hoping to win her back. Vicki has spent time in jail for stealing from her former employer. They make a clownish business duo, messing up sales pitches and being forced to stay in a dingy motel called... Sunny Nights. By this point I was mostly thinking, "Yes, but so what?"

Well, we then get an abrupt gear change. Martin meets a beautiful woman called Susi (Jessica De Gouw) at a sales convention, they go for a drink and tanning talk turns to sex, which surprised me because I really didn't think Martin had it in him.

Over breakfast it emerges that she has recorded their sexual acrobatics and this was a big honeytrap. A very unpleasant heavy called Kash (Miritana Hughes) arrives to tell Martin that if he doesn't pay A$10,000 by tomorrow the sex tape is going on the internet. It seems Susi chose him a) because of the indent on his finger where he had removed his wedding ring and b) because annoying Vicki had conspicuously spent A$750 on a bottle of "rich prick rum" to make their business look successful.

And this is when it became irritating again. What Martin would have done in real life is call the blackmailers' bluff and say, "Fine — post the video." He is separated from his wife, has no children and isn't famous, so who cares? But he wants to get back with his wife and this is a TV drama, so of course he doesn't, and stupidly sets about finding the money. Why are TV characters the only people who don't know that paying blackmailers makes the problem much worse?

What follows is a chaotic but well-scripted series of unfortunate events including a quite gory murder and torture by tooth extraction. Forte and Carden up their games after an unremarkable start and there is a wannabe whiff of *Breaking Bad* as ordinary, quite boring people are drawn into an underworld of crime. It becomes an enjoyable, if dark, romp. See, Martin? Letting them do their worst with the sex tape would have been so much easier.

LISA TOMASETTI/ITV

Will Forte and D'Arcy Carden play a clownish sibling duo

Radio choice

The Great Crime Mystery
Radio 4, 9am

The former BBC home editor Mark Easton, *above*, returns to the mothership with a series looking at the huge fall in violent crime and property crime in Britain over the past 30 years. It reveals that 80 per cent of the public think that crime is on the rise. Easton believes that the true statistics have been ignored, dismissed or denied. This first programme explains how we can be confident that crime is falling, with interviews with statisticians and political advisers who were themselves a bit baffled by the figures. It's good to have Easton's calm, factual reporting back on the network.
Clair Woodward

Times Radio

Digital, web, smart speaker, app

5.00am Tom Nunan **6.00** Rosie Wright and Stig Abell with Breakfast **10.00** Hugo Rifkind **1.00pm** Jo Coburn **2.00** Jane Garvey **4.00** Carolyn Quinn with Drive **7.00** Darryl Morris **10.00** Neil Breakwell **1.00am** The Best of Times Radio

Radio 2

FM: 88-90.2 MHz

6.30am Sara Cox **9.30** Vernon Kay **12.00** Jeremy Vine **2.00pm** Clara Amfo **4.00** Jason Manford **7.00** Prom Nights **9.00** The Blues Show with the Black Keys **10.00** Melvin Odoom **12.00** OJ Borg **3.00** Alternative Sounds of the 90s **4.00** Steffan Powell

Radio 3

FM: 90.2-92.4 MHz

6.30am Breakfast
9.30 Essential Classics
1.00pm Classical Live
Linton Stephens introduces highlights from the Proms, including the Los Angeles Philharmonic in Beethoven's Symphony No 7, and a performance of Haydn's Nelson Mass. BBC Proms — Zelenka (*Miserere* in C minor); Edinburgh International Festival — John Wallace (*Two Places in Fife — Methihill Scherzo and Dunsire St Rag*); BBC Proms — Bach transc. Duruflé (*Jesus bleibet meine Freude*); and Beethoven (Symphony No 7 in A); Summer Festivities of Early Music, Prague — Allegri (*Miserere mei Deus*); Edinburgh International Festival — Ethel Smyth (*Three Moods of the Sea*); and BBC Proms — Haydn (Mass in D minor — *Nelson*)
4.00 Composer of the Week: Felix Mendelssohn
Kate Molleson follows the composer's journeys across Europe, beginning with his privileged yet restless youth, from Berlin to Switzerland and Paris
5.00 In Tune
7.00 Live BBC Proms 2026
Alexandra Humphreys presents live from the Royal Albert Hall as Ryan Bancroft conducts the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and clarinettist Anthony McGill in Copland, Gabriel Kahane and Stravinsky. Copland (*Billy the Kid* — suite); Gabriel Kahane (Clarinet Concerto, *If Love Will Not Swing Wide the Gates* — BBC co-commission: European premiere). c 7.50 Interval. c 8.10 Stravinsky (*Petrushka* — 1947 version)
10.00 Night Tracks
11.30 'Round Midnight
12.30am Through the Night

Radio 4

FM: 92.4-94.6 MHz

5.00am News Summary
5.04 Last Word (r)
5.34 Shipping Forecast
5.43 Prayer for the Day
5.45 Farming Today
6.00 Today
9.00 Choice The Great Crime Mystery
Perceptions of the crime rate (1/3)
9.30 How Did We Get Here: No World Order
The Beijing Olympics, the financial crash and the Arab Spring (4/6)
10.00 Woman's Hour
11.00 Behind the Crime
How gaming almost led to 100 years in a US prison (3/3)
11.45 Book of the Week: The Fire in the Mountain — Sicily, Etna and her People
By Helena Attlee (1/5)
12.04pm You and Yours
1.00 The World at One
1.45 Human Intelligence
Roman statesman Cicero (1/10)
2.00 The Archers (r)
2.15 Alone
By Moray Hunter (6/6) (r)
2.45 Opening Lines
John Yorke explores Don DeLillo's 1988 novel *Libra* (2/2) (r)
3.00 Great Lives
Profile of Poly Styrene (2/9)
3.30 You're Dead to Me (8/13) (r)
4.00 Pride Before the Fall (r)
4.30 Soul Music
Rasputin by Boney M (1/5) (r)
5.00 PM
6.00 Six O'Clock News
6.30 Just a Minute
With guests Paul Merton, Zoe Lyons, Catherine Bohart and Paterson Joseph (5/6)
7.00 The Archers
Emotions run high for Lynda
7.15 Front Row
8.00 The Briefing Room (r)
8.30 BBC Inside Science (r)
9.00 The Great Crime Mystery
Public perceptions of the crime rate (1/3) (r)
9.30 How Did We Get Here: No World Order (4/6) (r)
10.00 The World Tonight
10.45 Book at Bedtime: Mr Sidhu's Post Office
By Amman Brar (1/10)
11.00 Intimacy
Liza confronts the past and faces serious consequences (4/4)
11.30 Poetry Please
Jacob Polley talks to Roger about his choices from the request database (2/4) (r)
12.00 News and Weather
12.30am Book of the Week: The Fire in the Mountain — Sicily, Etna and her People (r)
12.48 Shipping Forecast
1.00 As BBC World Service

Radio 4 Extra

Digital only

8.00am Dr Phil's Bedside Manner **8.30** Adrian Mole: The Cappuccino Years **8.45** Agnes Grey **9.00** Just a Minute **9.30** The Essay: British Film Comedians **9.45** Daily Service **10.00** Sounds Natural **10.30** The Pleasures of Brecht **11.00** The Wolf Far Hence **11.30** The Senior Partner **12.00** The Adventures of John and Tony **12.30pm** Dad's Army **1.00** Dr Phil's Bedside Manner **1.30** Adrian Mole: The Cappuccino Years **1.45** Agnes Grey **2.00** Wordaholics **2.30** A Whole 'Nother Story **3.00** The Growing Summer **3.45** Short Works **4.00** Sounds Natural **4.30** The Pleasures of Brecht **5.00** The Wolf Far Hence **5.30** The Senior Partner **6.00** The Adventures of John and Tony **6.30** Dad's Army **7.00** Dr Phil's Bedside Manner **7.30** Adrian Mole: The Cappuccino Years **7.45** Agnes Grey **8.00** Wordaholics **8.30** A Whole 'Nother Story **9.00** The Growing Summer **9.45** Short Works **10.00** Comedy Club: Just a Minute **10.30** Truly, Madly, Bletchley **10.45** Quando, Quando, Quando **11.00** The People Have Spoken **11.30** The In Crowd

Radio 5 Live

MW: 693, 909

5.00am Wake Up to Money **6.00** 5 Live Breakfast **9.00** Rima Ahmed **11.00** Emma Vardy **2.00pm** Gordon Smart **4.00** 5 Live Drive **7.00** The Monday Night Club **9.00** 5 Live Cricket **10.00** Qasa Alom **1.00am** Dotun Adebayo

talkSPORT

MW: 1053, 1089 kHz

5.00am Early Sports Breakfast **6.00** Breakfast with Jeff Stelling **10.00** Jim White and Simon Jordan **1.00pm** Hawksbee and Jacobs **4.00** Drive **7.00** Kick Off **10.00** The Sports Bar **1.00am** Extra Time with Paul Ross

Talk

Digital only

6.00am Jeremy Kyle **10.00** Julia Hartley Brewer **1.00pm** Ian Collins **4.00** Kevin O'Sullivan **7.00** Peter Cardwell **10.00** Petrie Hosken **1.00am** Paul Ross

6 Music

Digital only

5.00am Chris Hawkins **7.00** Nick Grimshaw **10.00** Lauren Laverne **1.00pm** Craig Charles **4.00** Steve Lamacq's Teatime Session **7.00** New Music Fix Daily **9.00** Riley & Coe **11.00** Artist in Residence: Shygirl **12.00** Boygenius Live at the BBC **12.30am** Phoebe Bridgers at the BBC **1.00** Phoebe Bridgers Live **2.00** Artist in Residence: Phoebe Bridgers **4.00** The Phoebe Bridgers Playlist

Virgin Radio

Digital only

6.30am The Chris Evans Breakfast Show **10.00** Emma B **2.00pm** Ben Jones **6.00** Will MacDonald **10.00** Goldierocks **2.00am** Steve Denyer

Classic FM

FM: 100-102 MHz

6.30am Tim Lihoreau **9.00** The Hall of Fame Hour **10.00** Aled Jones **1.00pm** Anne-Marie Minhall **4.00** Margherita Taylor **7.00** Relaxing Evenings with John Brunning **9.00** Composer Carousel with John Brunning **10.00** Calm Classics **1.00am** Bill Overton **4.00** Early Breakfast

television

PICKS OF THE DAY

Buried with Michael Sheen
BBC2, 9pm

Is Michael Sheen bored by acting, or does he want a hobby? After signing up for this autumn's *Celebrity Traitors* and succeeding Richard Osman as the new host of *House of Games*, he's presenting a two-part documentary that was inspired by a bout of doomscrolling. In 2017 he went down an online rabbit hole and discovered the whistleblower Douglas Gowan, a farming consultant who claimed that land in south Wales had been poisoned by toxic chemical dumping. Stunned by the allegations, Sheen got in touch with Gowan, who was terminally ill. Sheen spent two days with him, filming interviews and learning his life story before he died in 2018, aged 74. Now, haunted by the idea of an awful scandal, Sheen is trying to establish whether he has stumbled upon a cover-up or a conspiracy. **Emma Bullimore**

Michael Sheen, BBC2, 9pm

Celebrity PopMaster TV
More4, 9pm

Since Ken Bruce launched the TV version of his radio quiz three years ago, new series have been heralded by one-off celebrity specials. Hitherto the contestants have been a mix of soap stars, reality TV stars and TV presenters, plus DJs and some people who have been in the charts, such as Toyah Willcox. This year's line-up is dominated by pop stars — all 50-plus, and mostly with second careers on the telly, they belong or belonged to bands who enjoyed their heyday as the 20th century wound down — Kéllé Bryan from Eternal, Carol Decker from T'Pau, Shaun Ryder from Happy Mondays, Dougie Vipond from Deacon Blue. **JD**

Long Lost Family: Born Without Trace — What Happened Next
ITV1, 9pm

This *What Happened Next* episode catches up with two foundlings who appeared in the first run of Nicky

BBC1

6.00am Breakfast
9.30 Countryfile Treasures (r)
10.30 Garden Rescue (r)
11.15 Homes Under the Hammer (r) (AD)
12.15pm Bargain Hunt. The teams scour Ardingly antiques fair in West Sussex (AD)
1.00 BBC News at One; Weather
1.35 BBC Regional News; Weather
1.45 BBC News at One; Weather
2.00 Money for Nothing. A large bookcase poses a huge challenge for carpenter Sam
2.45 Escape to the Country. Alistair Appleton helps a family find a home with land for horses in Aberdeenshire
3.30 The Repair Shop. Experts restore a book made by two loving parents, a camping stove from 1957, a table bought in Thailand in the 1960s and a tweed flat cap (r) (AD)
4.30 The Answer Run. Jason Manford hosts
5.15 Pointless. Quiz hosted by Alexander Armstrong and Nish Kumar (r)
6.00 BBC News at Six; Weather
6.30 BBC Regional News; Weather

7.00 The One Show With Roman Kemp and Lauren Laverne

7.30 EastEnders A situation escalates for Nicola and George, Avani tries to play matchmaker, and Amy worries about recent events (AD)

8.00 Child Maintenance: Parents Under Pressure — Panorama The child maintenance system

8.30 Scam Interceptors Ethical hacker Jim Browning catches scammers at work on their own CCTV (r)

9.00 Death in Paradise A reggae rap artist is shot dead at a soundcheck for a concert. Things prove uncomfortable for Marlon when he discovers a personal connection to the crime. Caribbean-set detective drama starring Ralf Little (7/9) (r) (AD)

10.00 BBC News at Ten

10.30 BBC Regional News and Weather
10.40 Have I Got News for You David Tennant hosts (6/10) (r)

11.10 FILM: Mission: Impossible III (12, 2006) Former secret agent Ethan Hunt is called out of retirement when an ex-trainee is taken hostage by a ruthless arms dealer, but when the rescue operation goes wrong, the villain decides to target Hunt's fiancée. Action thriller sequel starring Tom Cruise and Philip Seymour Hoffman (AD)

1.10am-6.00 BBC News

BBC2

6.45am Beechgrove Garden (r)
7.15 The Answer Run (r)
8.00 Sign Zone: The Repair Shop (r) (AD, SL)
9.00 BBC News
1.00pm Richard Osman's House of Games. With Nina Conti, Nick Helm, Athena Kugblenu and Toby Tarrant (r)
1.30 The Finish Line. Quiz show (r)
2.15 Do You Know Your Place? (r)
2.45 Animal Park Summer. A lion needs surgery to amputate part of its tail (r) (AD)
3.30 Serengeti II. A storm threatens the animals of the African savannah (r) (AD)
4.30 Vintage Antiques Roadshow. From Renishaw Hall, Derbyshire (r)
5.15 Flog It! From the National Maritime Museum, Cornwall (r)
6.00 Richard Osman's House of Games. Edith Bowman, Rhys James, Anita Rani and Simon Rimmer take part (r)
6.30 Bear Grylls: Wild Reckoning. A couple whose marriage was pushed to the brink try to reconnect (r) (AD)

7.00 Global Eye A report from Cape Coast on slavery's legacy in Ghana

7.30 Mastermind Specialist subjects include the films of Paul Newman and Hergé's Tintin books

8.00 Only Connect Accrual World take on the Knitwits in a first-round match

8.30 University Challenge Bath take on City St George's in the first-round

9.00 Buried with Michael Sheen The actor investigates claims of conspiracy, complicity and denial over allegations of toxic chemical contamination in Wales. *See picks of the day* (1/2) (AD)

10.00 Mortimer & Whitehouse: Gone Fishing The duo fish for perch on the River Thames (4/6) (r) (AD)

10.30 Newsnight Presented by Faisal Islam

11.05 Disclosure: Welcome to Glasgow Myles Bonnar investigates claims that parts of Scotland's biggest city have become no-go zones because of crime, homelessness and antisocial behaviour

12.05am A House Through Time Charting history through the successive inhabitants of an Edinburgh house (r) (AD) **1.05** Sign Zone: Countryfile. Young farmers in West Sussex (r) (SL) **2.00-2.45** Bergerac. A revelation about the night of Cate's murder changes everything (r) (AD, SL)

ITV1

6.00am Good Morning Britain
10.00 This Morning
1.30pm ITV News; Weather
2.00 Dickinson's Real Deal. The dealers den descends on Nottingham, where Henry Nicholls gets a grilling over a brooch collection and Fay Rutter sets her sights on a German camera (r) (AD)
3.00 Deal or No Deal. Stephen Mulhern hosts the game show as another hopeful contestant tries to open the 22 red boxes in the right order for the chance to win a life-changing cash prize (r) (AD)
4.00 Tipping Point. Ben Shephard hosts the arcade-themed quiz in which contestants drop tokens down a choice of four chutes in the hope of winning a £10,000 jackpot (r)
5.00 The Chase. Bradley Walsh presents as contestants from Worcester, Pont-y-Clun, Blackburn and Mansfield take on one of the ruthless Chasers (r)
6.00 Regional News; Weather
6.30 ITV News; Weather

7.30 Fletchers' Family Farm Kelvin is in the market for a bull. Last in the series (r) (AD)

8.00 Emmerdale Charity maintains her false confession and Ruby plans the theft of Jimmy's shipment (AD)

8.30 Coronation Street Sarah refuses to use her contacts to help another prisoner (AD)

9.00 Long Lost Family: Born Without Trace — What Happened Next Foundling Susanne Barrow reveals further discoveries after meeting her half-brother Ian in 2024, while Tom Yeo discusses an unusual development after his appearance on the show. *See picks of the day* (AD)

10.00 ITV News at Ten; Weather; followed by Regional News

10.45 Cold Case Forensics: In the Blood Forensic scientist Angela Gallop and her team reveal how clues in blood traces helped solve two crimes, including the killing of 10-year-old Damilola Taylor (3/3) (r) (AD)

11.40 The Assembly Celebrities are interviewed by neurodivergent individuals (r)

12.05am Shop on TV 3.00 The Staircase. It is 2004 and Michael and his family struggle with the court's decision, while Jean and his producer Denis clash over whose side of the story they are telling (r) (AD, SL) **4.05** Unwind with ITV **5.10-6.00** Dickinson's Real Deal (r) (AD, SL)

Channel 4

6.30am The King of Queens (r) (AD)
7.45 Everybody Loves Raymond (r) (AD)
9.10 Frasier (r) (AD)
11.10 Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA (r)
12.05pm Channel 4 News Summary
12.10 Find It, Fix It, Flog It (r) (AD)
1.10 The Great House Giveaway. An accounts manager and a kitchen and bedroom fitter transform a house (r)
2.10 Countdown. With Debbie McGee
3.00 A Place in the Sun. A dream holiday home in or around Roquetas de Mar, on Spain's Costa Almería (r)
4.00 The Great B&B Challenge. Six couples compete to win a five-bedroom B&B in the heart of rural France (r)
5.00 Château DIY. At the Chateau du Puits Es Pratx a murky pond is in need of a major transformation (r) (AD)
6.00 American Pickers. Frank Fritz jumps for joy as he and Mike Wolfe pick a recently closed toy museum that is ready to sell its collection of treasures (r) (AD)

7.00 Channel 4 News

8.00 Martin & Roman's Irish Road Trip Martin and Roman Kemp explore Meath and Dublin, from the Boyne Valley tombs and the Hill of Tara to the Hellfire Club ruins and Slane Castle, mixing myths, music and memories (2/3) (AD)

9.00 Celebrity Hunted Two celebrities on the run drop in at a show bar in Leeds but it seems they may have been tracked. A social media post provokes the hunters to raid a retirement home and a couple of fugitives pop up live on the BBC. Continues tomorrow (AD)

10.00 Secret Lives of Gypsy Wives Trewley's first rap song enjoys mixed success, and her Christmas present for her mum misfires, so she tries to make up for it by taking her to speed dating (AD)

11.05 Surgery Secrets of the Super Rich A beauty journalist has a £9,500 nano-fat treatment to rejuvenate her under-eye shadows and a former professional footballer tackles hair loss head-on in an eight-hour transplant (5/6) (r) (AD)

12.05am Walter Presents: Everybody Lies *See picks of the day* **1.00** Ramsay's Hotel Hell (r) (AD, SL) **1.50 FILM: Blue Bayou (15, 2021)** Drama starring Justin Chon **3.45** Levison Wood: Walking with Polar Bears (r) (AD, SL) **4.40** Hollyoaks Omnibus (r) (AD, SL) **5.50-6.30** Countdown (r)

5

6.00am Milkshake!
9.15 Jeremy Vine
11.30 Storm & Alexis
12.45pm 5 News at Lunchtime
12.50 Matt Allwright
2.20 FILM: An Affair to Die For (12, TVM, 2023) A young woman's father becomes the obsession of her seductive room-mate, who will stop at nothing to possess him. Thriller starring Ryan Francis (AD)
4.00 Castle. Alexis and Castle are on a flight to London when they discover that an air marshal has been murdered (r)
4.55 Love Nature. Sally from Northamptonshire Badger Group checks on an urban badger sett (r)
5.00 5 News with Dan Walker
6.00 Cyprus: Jewel of the Med. A profile of the Mediterranean island, which enjoys 11 months of sunshine, beautiful beaches, crystal-clear waters, and attracts four million visitors a year (r)
6.55 5 News Update

7.00 Traffic Cops Officers are on the lookout for a suspected cloned car and four suspects make a run for it when it is spotted, with one recognised as someone who rammed a police car weeks before (r)

7.55 5 News Update

8.00 Street Cops: Catching the Yobs A teen runs from PC Ellie on the high street, as police unearth a nasty, studded baseball bat in the bushes. Northampton Street cops execute a warrant on a suspected drug dealer

9.00 Fare Dodgers: At War with the Law In London, investigators hunt for a woman thought to owe more than £2,300 in unpaid fares, and attempt to stop her at Chadwell Heath station to question her about "short faring"

10.00 Police Interceptors: Taking Down the Shoplifting Gangs Officers in Burnley go after prolific suspects, including two brothers whose campaign of shoplifting is out of control, and police prepare a dawn raid as part of Operation Even (3/4) (r)

11.05 Traffic Cops In Harrogate, a reckless motorcyclist with a long history of violence puts lives in danger as he desperately tries to outrun the cops, while a trap is set on the A1 by police targeting drug dealers (r)

12.05am Car Pound Cops (r) **1.00** Cruise TV with LoveitBookit (r) **2.00** GPs: Behind Closed Doors (r) **2.50** Castle (r) **3.45** Friends (r) **4.35** Cruising with Susan Calman (r) (AD, SL) **5.25** Entertainment News on 5 **5.35** Paw Patrol (r) (SL) **5.45-6.00** The Adventures of Paddington (r) (SL)

television

Campbell and Davina McCall's spin-off series in 2024. Back then we met Susanne, who was found in a phone-box in the 1970s and approached the show after beginning to search for her birth mother in middle age. The team's efforts led instead to a meeting with Brian, a half-sibling. Two years on, she shows some interest in their shared birth father but continues the quest for her mum that originated when, aged 12, she learnt she was adopted after finding a file of papers. **John Dugdale**

Walter Presents: Everybody Lies
Channel 4, 12.05am

With a witty, credible script by Olivier Norek, one of France's leading crime writers, handsomely dishevelled Vincent Elbaz in the lead role and Paris as its glorious setting, this miniseries reeks of quality from the off. A former policeman is brought back to head up the Sensitive Cases Unit, so called because it investigates crimes committed by the rich and powerful. **Helen Stewart**

STREAMING CHOICE

Lanterns
HBO Max

After the cancellation of Disney+/Marvel's *Wonder Man* one series in comes another bold reworking of the comic-book superhero. It's the *Green Lantern* heroes Hal Jordan and John Stewart remodelled as *True Detective*-style investigators pulled into an earthbound murder in deepest Nebraska. Kyle Chandler and Aaron Pierre are perfect as Hal and John — and *Lantern* fans should spot the ways in which the story will expand from its earthly origins to encompass vast cosmic horror and the deep and twisted lore of the original comic book. **Andrew Male**

FILM CHOICE

Brassed Off (15, 1996)
Film4, 9pm

The colliery is threatened with closure, and with it will go the brass band, a 100-year-old institution and source of local pride. The miners must decide whether to fight for the mine, the band and, by extension, the town. The arrival of the winsome flugelhorn player Gloria (Tara Fitzgerald) injects some life, and leader Danny, a retired miner played by Pete Postlethwaite, urges his musicians to band together once more for a national competition. Danny's health is poor; the band gives him the will and the strength to fight his ailments. (108min) **Wendy Ide**

BBC4

7.00pm The Architecture the Railways Built (3/10) (AD)
7.40 The Flying Gardener (AD)
7.55 The Art of Spain. Northern Spain's 20th-century artists. Last in the series (AD)
9.00 Mastermind
9.30 Call My Bluff
10.00 Art on the BBC: Michelangelo — The Good, the Bad and the Ugly. How television has influenced people's understanding of the Renaissance giant
11.00 Art & Design: The Journey — Arena. Dadaism and surrealism
11.25 Wainwright: The Man Who Loved the Lakes
12.25am The Flying Gardener (AD)
12.40 The Art of Spain (AD) **1.40** Art & Design: The Journey — Arena
2.05am-3.05 Art on the BBC: Michelangelo — The Good, the Bad and the Ugly (SL)

Sky Arts

6.00am Musical Masterpieces **7.00** Battle of the Irish Dancers **8.00** Artist of the Year: Masterclass (AD)
9.00 Tales of the Unexpected (AD)
10.00 Alfred Hitchcock Presents
11.00 Discovering: Janet Leigh (AD)
12.00 The Art of Film with Ian Nathan (AD) **1.00pm** Tales of the Unexpected (AD) **2.00** The Alfred Hitchcock Hour **3.00** The Eighties (AD) **4.00** Discovering: Rod Steiger (AD) **5.00** Portrait Artist of the Year 2023 (AD)
6.00 Tales of the Unexpected (AD)
7.00 Alfred Hitchcock Presents
8.00 André Rieu: Shall We Dance?
11.00 Academy of Ancient Music: Vivaldi's Four Seasons
12.30am Notre-Dame: The Renaissance **2.05** National Theatre Live Under Milk Wood **4.00** My Week with Maggi Hambling **5.00am-6.00** The Art of Film with Ian Nathan (AD)

More4

8.55am Find It, Fix It, Flog It (AD)
10.00 Four in a Bed **12.40pm** Come Dine with Me **3.20** Four in a Bed **5.50** Car SOS (AD)
7.55 Grand Designs. Stuart and Rosie Treasurer from the Wirral plan to transform a small bungalow from a 1960s dormer into a slick piece of 21st-century architecture (8/8) (AD)
9.00 Celebrity PopMaster TV. Carol Decker, Dougie Vipond, Patsy Kensit, Kéllé Bryan and Shaun Ryder take part. *See picks of the day*
10.00 24 Hours in A&E. The stories of patients who are facing adversity head-on (6/8) (AD)
11.05 24 Hours in A&E. A nasty injury threatens to leave a father-of-three without the use of his right hand (5/8) (AD)
12.05am 999: On the Front Line
1.10 24 Hours in A&E (AD)
3.20am-3.50 A Place in the Sun

Live sport today

Nathan Trott of Cardiff City, 7pm

Live Tennis
Sky Sports Tennis, 4pm-12midnight
The Cincinnati Open. Coverage of day five of the joint ATP 1000 and WTA 1000 event, a hard-court tournament at Lindner Family Tennis Center in Mason, Ohio

Live MLB: Cincinnati Reds v St Louis Cardinals
TNT Sports 1, 6.30pm-9.30 (Start-time **6.40**). The National League Central match at Great American Ball Park

Live EFL: Cardiff City v Wrexham
Sky Sports Main Event, Sky Sports Football, 7pm-10.30 (Kick-off **8.00**). Coverage of the final match in the opening round of Championship fixtures, which is being held at Cardiff City Stadium

Live Test Cricket: Sri Lanka v India
TNT Sports 1, 5.15am-1.30pm
Coverage of day four of the First Test in the two-match series, which takes place at Galle International Stadium

Talking Pictures

6.00am The Vise (b/w) **6.35 FILM: The Sword of Monte Cristo (U, 1951) 8.10 FILM: Woman on the Run (PG, 1950)** (b/w) **9.45** Scotland Yard **10.30** Z Cars **11.35 FILM: Live it Up (U, 1963) 1.00pm** Richard the Lionheart (b/w) **1.35 FILM: Sleeping Car to Trieste (PG, 1948)** (b/w) **3.30** Discovering Westerns **5.00 FILM: Doctor in Love (PG, 1960)**
7.00 The Footage Detectives
8.00 Maigret
9.50 FILM: The Key (12, 1958) A tugboat captain falls for his dead friend's former girlfriend. Second World War romantic drama starring William Holden, Sophia Loren and Trevor Howard (b/w)
12.25am FILM: Breathless (12, 1960) (b/w) **2.15 FILM: The Killings at Outpost Zeta (PG, 1980) 4.05** Le Mans Car Racing **4.25** The Veil (b/w)
5.00am-6.00 The Man from UNCLE

Film4

11.00am The Son of Robin Hood (U, 1958) Adventure **12.40pm The Comancheros (PG, 1961)** Western **2.50 Man in the Saddle (U, 1951)** Western starring Randolph Scott **4.35 Charade (PG, 1963)** Romantic thriller with Audrey Hepburn (AD)
6.50 Fisherman's Friends: One and All (12, 2022) Comedy sequel starring James Purefoy (AD)
9.00 Brassed Off (15, 1996) A colliery band prepares for a competition, but the musicians are more concerned with the threatened closure of their pit. Drama starring Pete Postlethwaite. *See film choice*
11.10 Glass (15, 2019) Three men with superhuman abilities end up in a psychiatric hospital, where a doctor has sinister plans. Fantasy thriller with James McAvoy (AD)
1.45am-3.45 Cuban Fury (15, 2014) Comedy starring Nick Frost (AD)

BBC3

7.00pm The Catch Up
7.05 Deadly 60
7.30 Deadly 60
8.00 The Great British Sewing Bee. The sewers tackle challenges linked to the wide world of sport (AD)
9.00 Top Gear. Testing supercars
10.00 Silent Witness. Part one of two. Harry and Leo investigate a jockey's death (5/8)
11.00 Silent Witness. Part two of two. Nikki provides a breakthrough in the case (6/8)
12.00 FILM: Red Eye (12, 2005) A hotelier realises a passenger she has befriended is intent on involving her in an assassination. Thriller starring Rachel McAdams and Cillian Murphy **1.15am** OnlyFans: Inside the Machine (AD) **2.15** My Insta Scammer Friend (AD)
3.00am-4.00 Vigil (AD, SL)

ITV2

6.00am Backyard Builds (SL) **6.30** Dress to Impress (AD, SL) **7.30** The Real Housewives of Potomac **8.20** The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills **9.15** The Only Way Is Essex **10.15** Dawson's Creek **11.10** Charmed **12.10pm** Deal or No Deal (AD) **1.10** Supermarket Sweep **2.10** The Floor (AD) **3.10** The Only Way Is Essex **4.10** The Real Housewives of Potomac **5.00** The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills **6.00** Celebrity Catchphrase (AD) **7.00** The Floor (AD) **8.00** The 1% Club (AD) **9.00** The Only Way Is Essex **10.00** Family Guy (AD) **10.30** Family Guy (AD) **11.00** Family Guy (AD) **11.30** American Dad! (AD) **12.35am** Bob's Burgers (AD) **1.30am-1.55** Plebs (AD, SL)

ITV3

6.00am George and Mildred **7.05** Classic Emmerdale (AD) **8.05** Classic Coronation Street (AD) **9.10** Agatha Christie's Poirot (AD) **11.35** Heartbeat (AD) **1.35pm** Midsomer Murders (AD) **3.35** Classic Emmerdale (AD) **4.40** Classic Coronation Street (AD) **5.50** Heartbeat (AD)
8.00 Midsomer Murders. A killer uses ancient torture methods to punish modern-day "sinners" (AD) **10.00** Grantchester. Alphy's attempts to cook a romantic dinner for Meg are interrupted when a familiar face arrives unannounced at the vicarage (3/8) (AD) **11.00** Grantchester (4/8) (AD) **11.55** Trial & Retribution. Part one of two. A friend of Chief Supt Walker is found dead (3/10) **12.55am** Trial & Retribution **1.55am-2.20** George and Mildred

ITV4

6.00am Magnum, PI (AD) **8.05** Robin of Sherwood **9.10** Boon **10.10** The Professionals (AD) **11.20** Robin of Sherwood **12.25pm** Magnum, PI (AD) **2.35** The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes (AD) **3.45** Boon **4.50** The Professionals (AD) **5.55** Minder (AD)
7.00 Formula E Highlights
8.00 The Motorbike Show. The 1944 Triumph 3HW is put to the test
9.00 FILM: Apollo 13 (PG, 1995) Fact-based drama about the efforts to return the crew of the Apollo 13 lunar mission safely to Earth after an on-board explosion. Starring Tom Hanks and Kevin Bacon (AD)
11.50 Star Trek: Strange New Worlds. Captain Pike is visited by his future self (10/10) (AD)
1.00am Lost **1.50am-2.45** Motorsport UK

U&Drama

6.00am Teleshopping **7.20** The Bill **8.05** Doctors **9.20** Classic Holby City **10.40** Casualty (AD) **11.40** The Bill **12.40pm** Classic EastEnders **2.00** Classic Neighbours **3.00** Whitstable Pearl (AD) **4.05** Lovejoy **5.20** As Time Goes By
6.00 Last of the Summer Wine
7.20 Last of the Summer Wine
8.00 The Brokenwood Mysteries. A man dies shortly after an altercation with his neighbour (3/4) (AD)
10.00 New Tricks. The murder of a fashion designer is reinvestigated after three years (6/10) (AD)
11.20 Luther. The cop searches for a copycat killer murdering women in a horrific echo of an unsolved case from the 1980s (1/4) (AD)
12.40am Lovejoy **1.50** Sister Boniface Mysteries (AD) **2.50am-4.00** Hotel Portofino (SL)

Variations

BBC1 N Ireland
10.40pm-11.10pm Girl Fight (r)

BBC1 Scotland
9.00pm-10.00 Disclosure: Welcome to Glasgow 10.40 Death in Paradise (r) 11.40 Have I Got News for You (r) 12.10am Sportscene: SWPL Highlights. Action from the opening round (r) 12.40 Scotcast (r) 1.10 Weather 1.15am-6.00 BBC News

BBC1 Wales
9.00pm-10.00 Buried with Michael Sheen

BBC2 N Ireland
10.00pm-10.30 Ar an Sliabh (r)

BBC2 Wales
9.00pm-10.00 Death in Paradise. Detective drama (r)

STV
11.05pm Red Rock: STV Player Presents (r) 12.00-3.00 Shop on TV 4.05am-6.00 Night Vision

BBC Scotland
2.00pm Sign Zone: Paramedics on Scene (r) 3.00-3.30 Beechgrove Garden (r) 7.00 News at Seven 7.30 Sportscene: SWPL Highlights 8.00 The Mountain (r) 8.30 Race Against the Tide 9.00 Interior Design Masters with Alan Carr (r) 10.00 River City 10.30 Two Doors Down (r) 11.00 Scotcast 11.30pm-12.00 Gary: Tank Commander (r)

S4C
6.00pm Arfordir Cymru: Sir Benfro (r) 6.30 Lowri Morgan: Her 333 (r) 7.00 Heno 7.30 News 8.00 Sgwrs Dan y Lloer (r) 8.25 Garddio a Mwy 9.00 Cefn Gwlad (r) 10.05 Y Deis (r) 10.35pm-11.40 Y Fets (r)

PBS America

8.00am Weathered: Earth's Extremes **8.35** Digging Up Britain's Past **9.35** The Stuarts **10.40** Franco: The Last Inquisitor **11.55** The Truth About Franco: Spain's Forgotten Dictatorship **1.00pm** Weathered: After the LA Firestorm **2.15** Digging Up Britain's Past **3.10** The Stuarts **4.15** Franco: The Last Inquisitor **5.25** The Truth About Franco: Spain's Forgotten Dictatorship **6.35** Digging Up Britain's Past **7.35** The Stuarts. The history of the 17th-century royal family **8.35** Franco: The Last Inquisitor. Spanish general and dictator Francisco Franco Bahamonde (1/2) **9.50** The Truth About Franco: Spain's Forgotten Dictatorship **10.55** The Stuarts **12.00** Franco: The Last Inquisitor **1.15am-2.00** Weathered: Earth's Extremes. Documentary

Sky Atlantic

6.00am Richard E Grant's Hotel Secrets (r) (AD) **8.00** Billions (r) (AD) **10.15** House of the Dragon (r) (AD) **12.35pm** Homicide: Life on the Street (r) **2.30** Billions (r) (AD) **4.40** The Last of Us (r) (AD)
6.45 House of the Dragon (r) (AD)
7.50 House of the Dragon. Rhaenyra tries desperately to hold the realm together (r) (AD)
9.00 FILM: Promising Young Woman (15, 2020) Crime thriller starring Carey Mulligan (AD)
11.00 Possession. Claudia is rescued by Cudjoe after Oliver becomes unexpectedly violent at Hope Hill (r) (AD)
11.55 Possession (r) (AD)
12.50am Dune: Prophecy (r) (AD) **2.00** Little Bird. New series. Canadian drama starring Darla Contois **3.00** Little Bird **4.00am-6.00** Urban Secrets (r)

Sky Docs

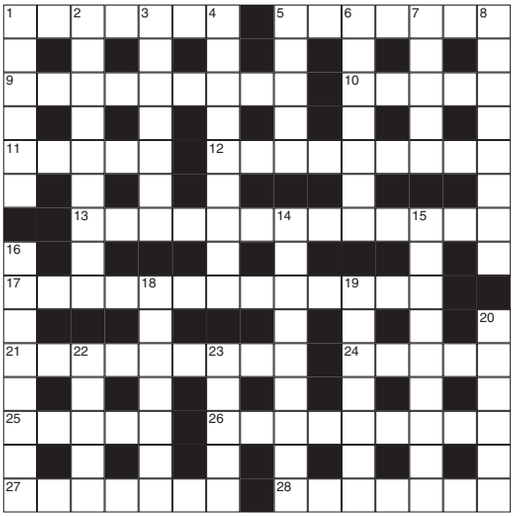
6.00am The 2010s (r) **7.00** Discovering: Tim Robbins (r) (AD) **8.00** The Directors (r) **9.00** Stax: Soulsville USA (r) (AD) **10.05** The Story of Late Night (r) **10.55** Celtics City (r) (AD) **12.00** Bardot (r) **2.00pm** Terry Venables: A Man Can Dream. Documentary (r) (AD) **4.00** The Directors (r) **5.00** Discovering: Tim Robbins (r) (AD)
6.00 I Am Heath Ledger (r) (AD)
7.50 My Icon: Leon Pryce (r) (AD)
8.00 Mind Over Murder (r)
9.00 Mind Over Murder (r)
10.05 Mind Over Murder (r)
11.00 FILM: Bobby Robson: More Than a Manager (12, 2018) Exploring the career of the former football manager (AD)
1.00am The Essex Murders: Who Killed Goldfinger? (r) (AD) **4.00** The Directors (r) **5.00am-6.00** Discovering: Tim Robbins (r) (AD)

U&Yesterday

6.10am Abandoned Engineering (AD) **8.00** Bangers & Cash: Restoring Classics (AD) **10.00** Secret Nazi Bases **11.00** The World at War **12.00** Antiques Roadshow **2.00pm** Bangers & Cash (AD) **4.00** Secret Nazi Bases **5.00** The World at War. The French army's defeat **6.00** Antiques Roadshow **7.00** The Blue Planet. An exploration of Earth's marine life (AD) **8.00** Canal Boat Diaries. Robbie Cumming travels from Barton Swing Aqueduct to Liverpool Docks (5/5) **8.30** Canal Boat Diaries (1/4) **9.00** Canal Boat Diaries (2/4) **9.30** Canal Boat Diaries (3/4) **10.00** Bangers & Cash (AD) **11.00** Bangers & Cash (AD) **12.00** Bangers & Cash: Restoring Classics (AD) **1.00am** Find It, Fix It, Flog It **2.00** Abandoned Engineering (AD) **3.00am-6.10** Teleshopping

MindGames

General Knowledge Crossword No 351



Across

1 Nautical device for winding in heavy ropes (7)
5 Ever-present constellation of the northern sky representing the father of Andromeda (7)
9 Lancashire town situated on a wide inlet of the Irish Sea (9)
10 Currency of Poland (5)
11 Cereal fungus causing serious health issues if ingested (5)
12 Small fast warship (9)
13 Hot drink made using processed granules (7,6)
17 Classic John Mills war film set in 1940s Egypt (3,4,2,4)
21 Colossal man-made structure on the Colorado River (6,3)
24 Christopher ---, original co-presenter of *Blue Peter* (5)
25 Artisan working in stone (5)
26 Ancient Egyptian temple site relocated in the 1960s (3,6)
27 Swiss brand of **13A** (7)
28 Hannah ---, goalkeeper who was player of the match in the Women's Euro 2025 final (7)

Down

1 London borough with a notable lock and market (6)
2 Species of falcon that is the world's fastest bird (9)
3 Roman writer who recorded the history of Agricola's campaign in Britannia (7)
4 Oscar-winning 2020 drama with Frances McDormand (9)
5 Salad plant often added to egg sandwiches (5)
6 Spanish conquistador who subdued the Inca empire (7)
7 Tough synthetic resin (5)
8 Amanda ---, US actress in *Mean Girls*, *Mamma Mia!* and *The Housemaid* (8)
14 Coastal town downriver from Gateshead and Newcastle (9)
15 William Henry ---, Victorian photography pioneer (3,6)
16 Jake ---, British 1500m world champion in 2022 (8)
18 Australasia, Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia (7)
19 Alkali metal element or a 1992 single by Nirvana (7)
20 European city in which the musical *Cabaret* is set (6)
22 Band whose early hits include *Supersonic* and *Shakermaker* (5)
23 --- Abbott, longest-serving female MP still in post (5)

Last week's solution

C	O	M	O	R	O	S		O	C	C	I	P	U	T
A		A		I		E		I		A		A		I
T	E	R	R	Y	H	A	L	L		P	E	R	O	N
S		T		A		S		E		E		S		S
		I	N	L	A	N	D	R	E	V	E	N	U	E
D		A				A		S		E		I		L
E	L	L	I	P	S	I	S		A	R	M	P	I	T
A				A		L		P		D				O
C	U	B	A	N	S		G	A	M	E	S	H	O	W
O		O		A		G		T				U		N
N	A	G	A	M	U	N	C	H	E	T	T	Y		
B		A		A		O		O		H		G		F
L	U	R	C	H		M	A	G	D	A	L	E	N	E
U		D		A		O		E		N		N		R
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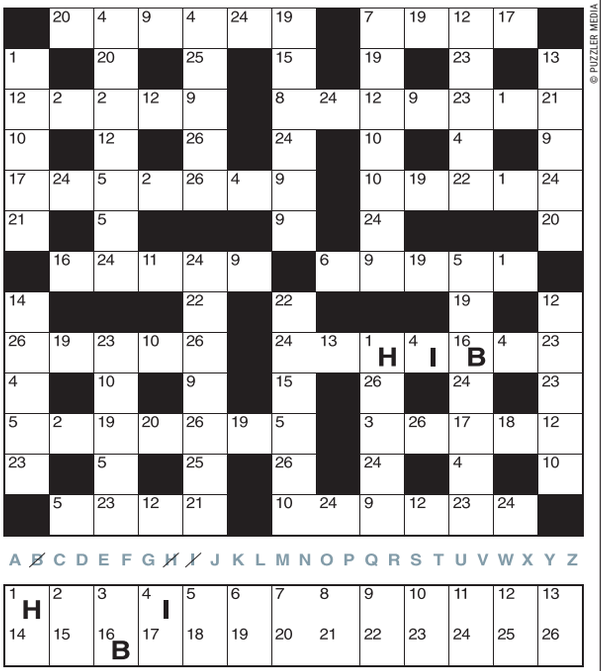
Codeword No 5921



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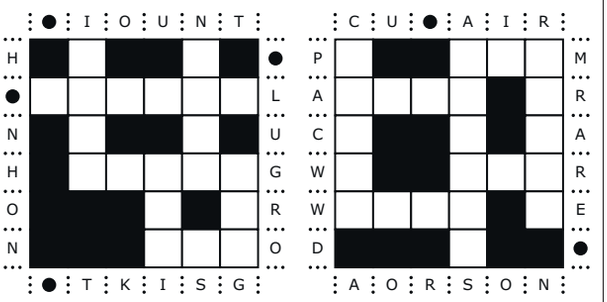
A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

1 H	2	3	4 I	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16 B	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

Every letter in this crossword-style grid is represented by a number from 1 to 26. Each letter of the alphabet appears in the grid at least once. Use the letters already provided to work out the identity of further letters. Enter letters in the main grid and the smaller reference grid until all 26 letters of the alphabet have been accounted for. Proper nouns are excluded. *Saturday's solution, right*

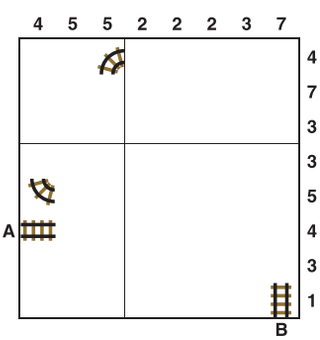
Cluelines **Stuck on Codeword?** To receive 4 random clues call 0901 293 6262 or text TIMECODE to 64343. Calls cost £1 plus your telephone company's network access charge. Texts cost £1 plus your standard network charge. For the full solution call 0905 757 0142. If you have an old newspaper and need clues from the past 7 days, call 0905 624 0024. Calls to 0905 cost £1 per minute plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5.30pm).

Lexica Easy No 9059 Hard No 9060



Slide the letters either horizontally or vertically back into the grid to produce a completed crossword. Letters are allowed to slide over other letters

Train Tracks No 2946



Lay tracks to enable the train to travel from village A to village B. The numbers indicate how many sections of track go in each row and column. There are only straight sections and curved sections. The track cannot cross itself.

Quintagram® No 2648

Solve all five **cryptic** clues using each letter underneath once only

1 Lock up silver in church (4)

2 Polish emissary finally finding love (5)

3 Playing in duet together (6)

4 Charlie was suspended, and reformed (7)

5 Gift Europeans initially call exhausting (10)

A	A	A	C	C	C	D	D		
E	E	E	E	E	G	G	G		
H	H	I	I	K	K	N	N		
N	N	N	O	R	T	U	Y		

Challenge your mind with these fiendish word and number puzzles

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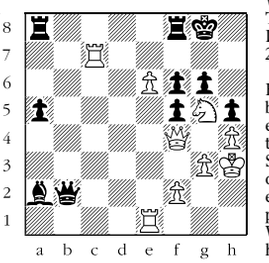
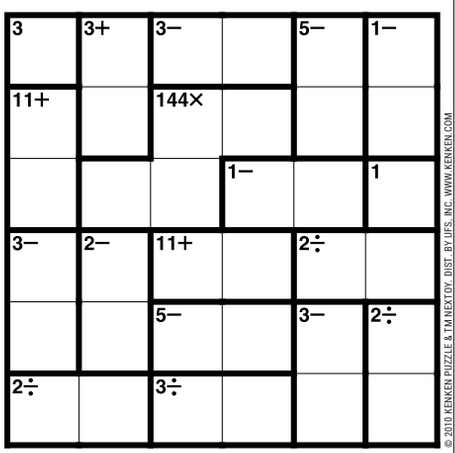
Winning Move



White to play. This position is from Dong-Al Ibrahim, Biel 2026.

Black's a-pawn could be powerful in the endgame. However, as the German teacher Siegbert Tarrasch observed, "Before the endgame, the gods have placed the middlegame." What might the gods have done here?

KenKen Easy No 6913



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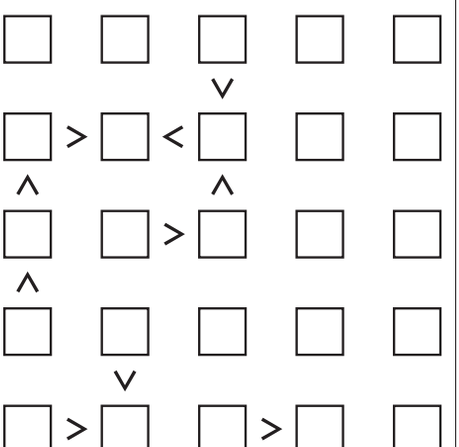
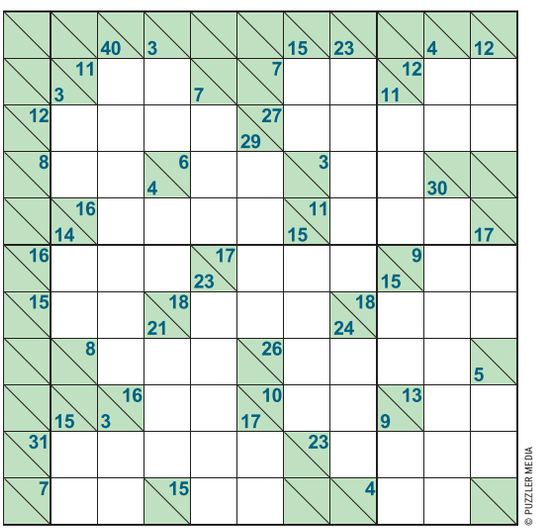
All the digits 1 to 6 must appear in every row and column. In each thick-line "block", the target number in the top left-hand corner is calculated from the digits in all the cells in the block, using the operation indicated by the symbol.

Futoshiki No 5461



Fill the blank squares so that every row and column contains each of the numbers 1 to 5 once only. The symbols between the squares indicate whether a number is larger (>) or smaller (<) than the number next to it.

Kakuro No 4420



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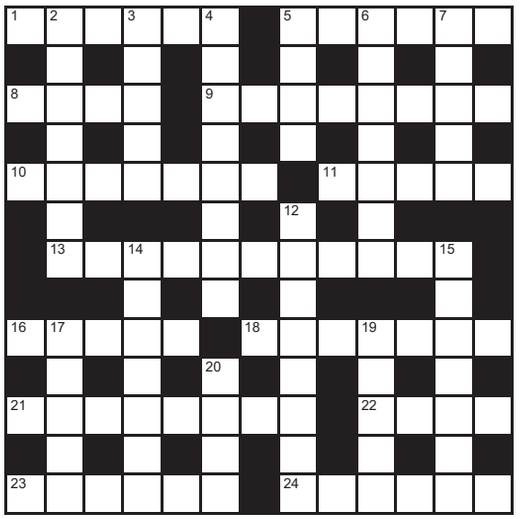
Fill the grid using the numbers 1 to 9 only. The numbers in each horizontal or vertical run of white squares add up to the total in the triangle to its left or above it. The same number may occur more than once in a row or column, but not within the same run of white squares.

MindGames

times2 Crossword No 10,237



Across

1 Uttered a shrill bark (6)
5 Jester lamented by Hamlet (6)
8 Eastern spiritual and physical exercise system (4)
9 Christmas period (8)
10 Less advanced in age (7)
11 Baker's raising agent (5)
13 Classic political sitcom (3,8)
16 Second person possessive pronoun (5)
18 Measure of distance in imperial units (7)
21 Traditional Alpine singer (8)
22 Chinese currency unit (4)
23 Colour (6)
24 Over there (6)

Down

2 Frugal use of resources (7)
3 Edible shellfish (5)
4 Daniel ---, three-time Oscar-winning actor (3-5)
5 Part of an egg (4)
6 Back off, withdraw (7)
7 Ciphers (5)
12 Confusion, chaos (8)
14 Strange and incongruous (7)
15 Assess (a test score) again (7)
17 Trioxygen gas (5)
19 Most respected member (5)
20 Radiate softly (4)

Solution to Crossword 10,236

		J	E	T	H	R	O	T	U	L	L	
B		A		R		A		A		O		
A	C	C	R	A		S	U	R	P	A	S	S
D		K		N		C				T		U
M	A	P		S	P	A	C	E	S	H	I	P
A		O		C		L		N				E
N	A	T	T	E	R		C	E	N	S	O	R
N				N		S	R		U		G	
E	M	B	O	D	Y	I	N	G		C	U	R
R		L				E		I		T		A
S	H	A	T	T	E	R		S	W	I	S	S
		I		U		R		E		O		S
		I	R	O	N	M	A	I	D	E	N	

Need help with today's puzzle? Call 0905 757 0143 to check the answers. Calls cost £1 per minute plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390 (Mon-Fri 9am-5.30pm).

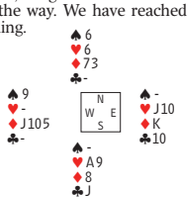
Bridge Andrew Robson

When someone says to you, "I've got good news and bad news," which do you ask to hear first? I tend to opt for the bad news, and it was the bad news that declarer received first in his 6♥ slam.

Winning the queen of diamonds lead with dummy's ace, declarer, Litany Chompers, cashed the king-queen of hearts, preparing to claim 12 tricks if both opponents followed (five hearts, four clubs, ace-king of spades and ace of diamonds). Bad news — West discarded (a diamond) on the second round.

It appears declarer must go one down but she still has a small chance of success. She needs East to be following to four rounds of clubs and three rounds of spades. Necessarily abandoning hearts, she crossed to the ace-king-queen of clubs and was happy to observe West discard (another diamond) on the third.

Declarer now crossed to the ace-king of spades and ruffed a spade, delighted to see East follow all the way. We have reached this ending.



Needing three of the last four tricks, declarer ruffed her winning fourth club (to get back to dummy) then led the fourth spade.

East was powerless. If he ruffed, declarer could discard her diamond and win the last two tricks with the ace-nine of hearts. If East discarded the king of diamonds, declarer could ruff with the nine and score her 12th trick with the ace. Slam made.

A bad news-good news to finish: "The bad news is your parachute didn't open. The good news is you won't need it again."

andrew.robson@thetimes.co.uk

Dealer: South, Vulnerability: Neither

Rubber

	♠AK64 ♥KQ6 ♦A73 ♣543	
♠9752 ♥5 ♦QJ10542 ♣96	N W E S	♠QJ8 ♥J1072 ♦K9 ♣10872
	♠103 ♥A9843 ♦86 ♣AKQJ	

S	W	N	E
1♥	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♣	Pass	2♦(1)	Pass
2♠(2)	Pass	3♥(3)	Pass
4♣(4)	Pass	4NT(5)	Pass
5♥(6)	Pass	6♥	End

(1) Fourth Suit Forcing, setting up a game-force (too strong simply to jump to 4♥).
(2) Something of a default reply, going back to responder's suit with a doubleton when you have no extra shape to show, nor a stopper in the fourth suit.
(3) Showing a hand too strong to have jumped to 4♥ last time.
(4) Control bid, showing some slam suitability.
(5) Roman Key Card Blackwood (agreeing hearts).
(6) Two of "five aces" (incl ♥K); no ♥Q.

Contract: 6♥, Opening Lead: ♦Q

Brain Trainer

EASY 24	TRIPLE IT	÷8	x2	+1/3 OF IT	DOUBLE IT	+48	÷8	HALVE IT	x2	ANSWER
MEDIUM 84	+5/6 OF IT	+22	−5/8 OF IT	x3	TRIPLE IT	+72	+1/3 OF IT	−88	÷25	ANSWER
HARDER 77	DOUBLE IT	+62	+1/6 OF IT	TRIPLE IT	÷7	HALVE IT	÷6	SQUARE IT	x14	ANSWER

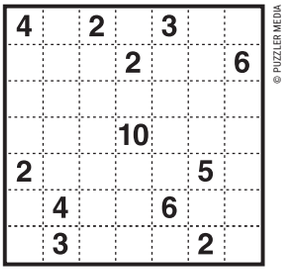
Polygon

From these letters, make words of **three** or more letters, always including the central letter. Answers must be in the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, excluding capitalised words, plurals, conjugated verbs (past tense etc), adverbs ending in LY, comparatives and superlatives.
How you rate 9 words, average; 12, good; 17, very good; 23, excellent

Saturday's answers

deft, defy, defy, delft, edify, elfin, feint, felid, felinity, felt, felty, fend, fetid, fidelity, field, fiend, file, filet, find, fine, finite, flint, flinty, flit, identify, infidel, **infidelity**, infield, left, lefty, lief, life, lift, nifty

Cell Blocks No 5804



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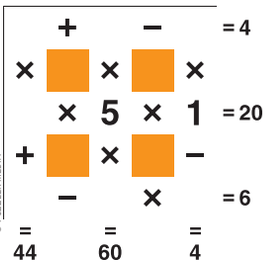
Divide the grid into square or rectangular blocks, each containing one digit only. Every block must contain the number of cells indicated by the digit inside it.

Set Square No 4423



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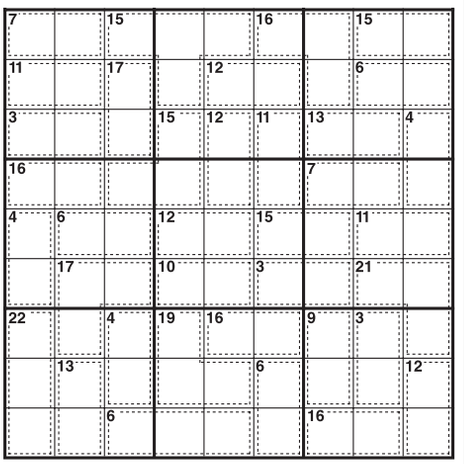
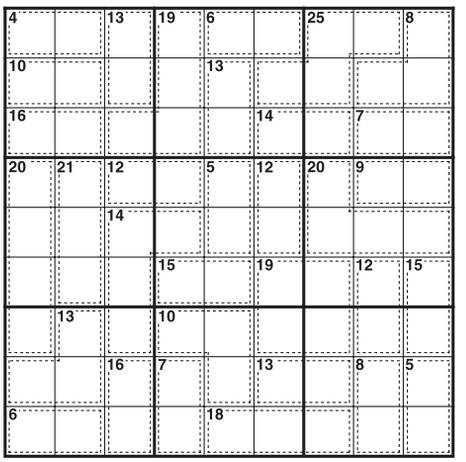
Enter each of the numbers from 1 to 9 in the grid, so that the six sums work. We've placed two numbers to get you started. Each sum should be calculated left to right or top to bottom.

Please note, BODMAS does not apply

Killer Gentle No 10,880



Killer Tricky No 10,881



As with standard Sudoku, fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Each set of cells joined by dotted lines must add up to the target number in its top-left corner. Within each set of cells joined by dotted lines, a digit cannot be repeated.

Cluelines Stuck on Sudoku, Killer or KenKen? Call 0901 293 6263 before midnight to receive four clues for any of today's puzzles. Calls cost £1 plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390 (Mon-Fri 9am-5.30pm).

Solutions

Quick Cryptic 3380

W	B	P	D		G	B	T					
E	M	O	T	I	V	E		A	L	L	O	W
N	B	C		L		L		I		I		
T	A	C	I	T		E	L	A	S	T	I	N
W	A		T		C		H					
I	N	T	E	R	S	E	C	T		E	R	A
T			H			I				S		
H	U	E		A	T	R	O	C	I	O	U	S
		S		P		A			C		E	
I	M	P	O	S	E	D		L	O	C	U	M
O		R		O		I		E		U		B
W	E	I	R	D		S	C	A	L	P	E	L
A		T		Y		H		D		Y		Y

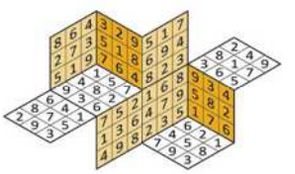
Codeword 5920

G	A	Z	U	M	P		D	I	R	K		
T		M		N		E		E		O		C
H	U	M	I	D		A	R	C	H	W	A	Y
U		O		E		R		L		A		C
M	I	N	E	R	A	L		A	N	N	U	L
P		I				Y		I				
B	A	N	J	O		A	M	A	S	S		
A				O		C				L		S
S	P	R	I	G		O	V	E	R	A	C	T
I		O		T	H		Q		N		E	
D	I	V	E	R	S	E		U	N	D	U	E
E		E		O		R		I		E		L
F	R	E	T		E	X	P	O	R	T		

Kakuro 4418

4	9		5	1			4	2
1	5	3	7	2		7	1	6	4
		1	8		4	9	3	7	5
6	1		9	6	8			3	1
9	6	7	3	2			7	2	
	4	9			6	4	9	1	7
4	9			3	9	8		5	9
2	3	4	5	1		1	5		
1	7	2	3		8	5	9	7	4
3	8				6	2	9	5	

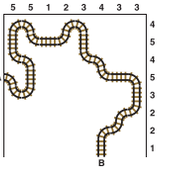
Tredoku 1955



Square Routes 389

M	C	R	P	B
O	N	E	E	E
O	S	T	R	A
M	U	C	K	P
B	M	O	L	E

Train Tracks 2945



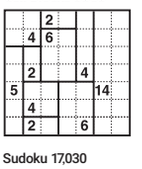
Set Square 4421

8	−	3	+	2
×		+		÷
9	−	4	−	1
÷		÷		×
6	×	7	+	5

Lexica 9053

S	K	I	M	P	Y	
	O		A			
T	A	U	N	T		
	L				S	
M	A	R	B	L	E	
					W	

Cell Blocks 5803



Futoshiki 5459

3	2 <	5	1	4
4	1	3 >	2	5
5	4	1	3	2
2 <	3 <	4 <	5	1
1 <	5	2	4 >	3

KenKen 6912

1	2	3	5	4	6
6	3	2	4	5	1
5	1	6	3	2	4
2	4	1	6	3	5
3	5	4	1	6	2
4	6	5	2	1	3

Lexica 9054

A	B	R	O	A	D	
	R			T		
P	A	R	C	E	L	
E		U			A	
R	U	M	P		C	
M					E	

Sudoku 17,030

1	2	8	6	9	7	5	4	3
7	4	5	3	8	1	9	6	2
6	9	3	2	4	5	8	7	1
5	8	1	4	2	9	6	3	7
4	3	7	5	1	6	2	9	8
2	6	9	8	7	3	1	5	4
8	1	6	9	3	4	7	2	5
9	7	4	1	5	2	3	8	6
3	5	2	7	6	8	4	1	9

Killer 10,879

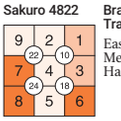
8	7	1	6	9	2	4	5	3
4	3	9	7	5	8	2	6	1
5	6	2	3	4	1	8	9	7
6	5	8	2	1	9	7	3	4
2	4	7	5	6	3	1	8	9
9	1	3	4	8	7	5	2	6
1	8	5	9	3	4	6	7	2
3	2	4	8	7	6	9	1	5
7	9	6	1	2	5	3	4	8

Today's solutions

Concise Quintagram
1 Lift
2 Window
3 Keeping
4 Steward
5 Talk shop

Cryptic Quintagram
1 Cage
2 Honey
3 United
4 Changed
5 Knackering

Sakuro 4822



Brain Trainer
Easy 12
Medium 32
Harder 1,134

Word watch

Propugnaculum (b) A defence or protection (*OED*)
Boltings (a) Coarse particles separated by sifting (*Collins*)
Hierurgy (b) A sacred rite (*Collins*)

Chess — Winning Move

1 Rg7+! is a typical tactic designed to get the white queen into the attack. It is quickly decisive: 1 ... Kxg7 2 Qc7+ Kg8 3 Qh7 mate

Quiz

1 Vivienne Westwood
2 Crude oil or petroleum
3 Palme d'Or or Golden Palm **4** Green salad
5 Truggy **6** Franklin D Roosevelt **7** Nauru **8** Hyde Park **9** Aneurin "Nye" Bevan **10** Elisabeth Sladen
11 Durres **12** Ava Pickett
13 Han Song **14** Surrey
15 Gemma Chan

THE TIMES

17.08.26

MindGames

For extra puzzles
See page 10

Word watch
David Parfitt

Propugnaculum
a The casing of a machine's drive shaft
b A defence or protection
c A roosting place for bats

Boltings
a Coarse particles separated by sifting
b Stomach ache
c Cured and dried pieces of meat

Hierurgy
a A task requiring completion yesterday
b A sacred rite
c The onset of winter

Answers on page 15

Sudoku

Easy No 17,031

			6		5			
6								7
	3	7	9		2	1	8	
	8	6	5		7	4	1	
	1	3				5	9	
4			8		1			3
	6						3	
	7		3		9		6	
		1	7		8	9		

Difficult No 17,032

		6	2			9	3	
3				8				5
	9				7			4
		5			2	4		
4							7	
			5					3
9	6	2			5			7
		4				6		
5		3		6			8	

Fiendish No 17,033

	7							
6		9			4		8	
			9	5		7		
	6	3	1				2	
		5				4		
					3	6		
8	5			3	6		9	
	2	7			8			1
		6					5	

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Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

The Times Daily Quiz
Olav Bjortomt

1 Which English fashion designer created the Westwood MacAndreas tartan for her 1993 Anglomania collection?

2 "Texas tea" is a nickname for which fossil fuel?

3 What is the top award at the Cannes Film Festival?

4 Which simple dish is called an insalata verde in Italian?

5 The name of which off-road vehicle is a portmanteau of "truck" and "buggy"?

6 Winston Churchill gave his 1943 painting *Tower of the Koutoubia Mosque* to which US president?

LAURENT HOU/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

7 Which Pacific island country has officially changed its name to the Republic of Naoero?

8 The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment is based on the southern edge of which London park?

9 Which Welsh politician said the "right kind" of Labour Party leader is a "desiccated calculating machine"?

10 Who played the *Doctor Who* companion Sarah Jane Smith?

11 Home to the biggest seaport in the country, what is the most ancient city in Albania?

12 Dubbed "the Charli XCX of young playwrights", which English dramatist wrote the 2025 debut play *1536*?

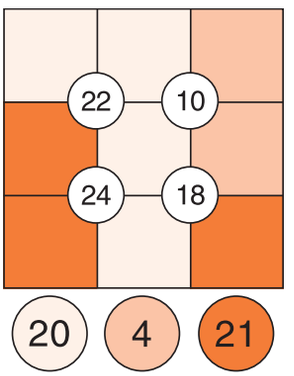
13 Which Chinese author wrote the 2000 science fiction novel *2066: Red Star Over America*?

14 The Oval is the home ground of which county cricket club?

15 Which British actress is pictured?

Answers on page 15

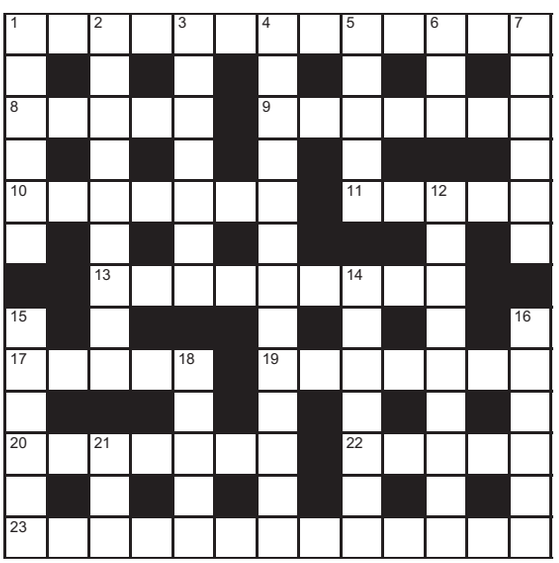
Sakuro
No 4822



Place the numbers 1 to 9 in the spaces so that the number in each circle is equal to the sum of the four surrounding spaces, and each colour total is correct

For interactive puzzles visit thetimes.com

The Times Quick Cryptic
No 3382 by Pedro



Across

1 Brass instrument: listen with boredom, possibly (5,8)
8 Choral piece — music of the early Tudors originally (5)
9 Italian dish is excessive in Rome? Not half (7)
10 Can I go wild about river being pesticide-free? (7)
11 Wary about poster of dubious intent? (5)
13 Popular feature involving bridge partnership coming soon? (2,7)
17 Yeast bubbling still (2,3)
19 Stolen limelight, say, in popular venue (7)
20 Some men finally brought in to assess explosive device (7)
22 Stick found in thickets, apparently, after turning round (5)
23 Christian belief potters around with Matins (13)

Down

1 Call us up, minutes before Monday (6)
2 One sadly trying to circumvent limits of true honesty (9)
3 Put out: court supports old lover with money (7)
4 Repurposed other charts, capturing sources of some confidence in psychiatric assessment (9,4)
5 Ponders America getting into endless disarray (5)
6 Concussed in fight, head being struck (3)
7 The writer getting upset about horse — Black Beauty, possibly (6)
12 Article on wine including suggestion for appetisers (9)
14 Working arrangement precedes attack (3,4)
15 Obsession with problem to force termination of conversation? (4-2)
16 Brook Republican getting into very hot water? (6)
18 Elevated skill of Parisian commerce (5)
21 Sense of self revealed in eastern board game (3)

Friday's solution on page 15

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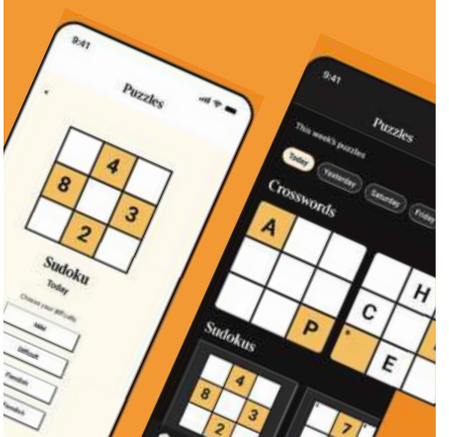

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